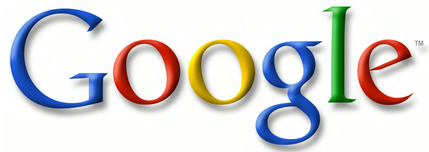


This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

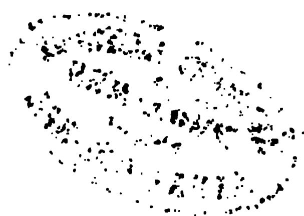
About Google Book Search

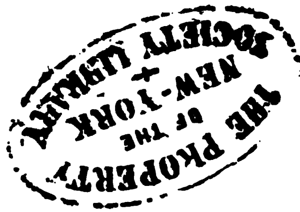
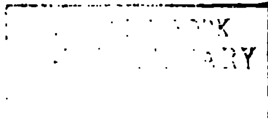
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at http://books.google.com/

ANNE WARNER

NEW-YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY
1758

AN ORIGINAL GENTLEMAN



"IT REALLY ISN'T PRACTICAL — TAKE MY WORD FOR IT."
[*Page* 39.

AN ORIGINAL GENTLEMAN

BY

ANNE WARNER

AUTHOR OF "THE REJUVENATION OF AUNT MARY," "SUSAN CLEGG AND HER FRIEND MRS. LATHROP," "SUSAN CLEGG AND A MAN IN THE HOUSE," ETC.

With a Frontispiece by

ALICE BARBER STEPHENS

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1908

79419B

Copyright, 1904, 1905, 1906, *by Ainslie Magazine Co.*; 1904, *by J. B. Lippincott Co.*; 1904, 1905, *by the Red Book Corporation*; 1906, 1907, *by Ess Ess Publishing Co.*; 1906, *by D. Appleton & Co.*; 1906, *by Associated Sunday Magazines Incorporated*; 1907, *by S. H. Moore & Company*; 1907, *by P. F. Collier & Son*; 1907, *by The Circle Publishing Company, New York*; 1907, *by The Town Topics Publishing Co.*; 1907, 1908, *by The Crowell Publishing Company.*

Copyright, 1908, *by Little, Brown, and Company.*

All rights reserved

Published September, 1908.

Electrotyped and Printed at
THE COLONIAL PRESS:
C. H. Simonds & Co., Boston, U.S.A.

F

CONTENTS

PAGE

An Original Gentleman 1
As Told by Renaud's Wife 89
Smoke or Fire? 103
When Janet Comes Marching Home 113
The Twelve Little Broilers 125
His Terrible Father 141
The Reversed Love Letters 157
The Bride's Prevision 165
Gaspard and His Wax Lady 179
Her Husband 189
Jane and Her Genius 199
Bessie's Mother 205
Wilfred and His Grandmother 225
The Cradle 231
As Taught by Ellen 241
His One and Only Meet 249
The Adjusted Honeymoon 263
Seeking Blindfolded 271
The Winter of Their Discontent 291
Frau A. D. 301
"Ee," said 'Lizabet — "Ee," said Hans . . . 315
Alpine Lights and Shadows 327

AN ORIGINAL GENTLEMAN

I

ST. ELOI had just gone out to telegraph the countess. The countess demanded a telegram assuring her of St. Eloi's well-being every morning when he was too far away to come in his motor and assure her personally of the fact. What the countess demanded of St. Eloi she invariably got, for she was very charming and he was very much in love. Dagobert was very much disgusted with his friend for being so much in love, because the countess was married and Dagobert's own experience in life had lain mainly along courses which develop the muscles instead of the heart and lead to matches instead of to other men's wives. He was a puritan by ancestry and his friend was a monarchist by the same token. He was American and the other man was French. The one was blond and the other dark. Indeed, everything was as different as different can be with the exception of a certain two years in the life of each, which two years had been spent at the same school in Ouchy and had resulted in so fast a friend-

ship that all their differences were continually re-bridged by its strength and solidity.

When Dagobert, one week previous to the opening of my story, had finished doing up the English with his companion athletes he had felt a more tremendous longing for St. Eloi than for any further results of glory, and had crossed the channel at once in search of a happy reunion. He had not known that there was a countess then, but he happened to arrive in Paris the same day that the countess's husband did the same thing, and it followed that, whatever St. Eloi might feel in his heart, there was for the time being no countess in his daily life. For M. le Général (the count) was so fearfully jealous that even the countess agreed in the advisability of the two young men's immediate departure for anywhere. Her husband had brought her eleven cases from Annam, and she felt able to be happy even though lonely. But she stipulated for the telegram daily — and she received it.

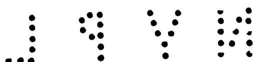
"What a fool you are!" Dagobert (in bed) said to St. Eloi (in the large dressing-room that connected their sleeping-rooms). "A married woman, too!"

He spoke in German because they had agreed to speak the language of whatever country they were in, and they were now in Hanover.

"Ach, young one," said St. Eloi, laughing, "only wait — only wait!"

"Me!" said Dagobert, "a married woman! Never."

There were many huge and fundamental differences between the two young men, as I already



pointed out, and in spite of their friendship their conversations were often hotly varied. To Dagobert, with his blunt American republicanism, there was something utterly silly in St. Eloi's exquisitely courtly hypocrisy.

"If I ever kiss a woman's hand I shall mean it," he had declared upon the extremely early morning which had followed that extremely late night which had followed his latest arrival in Paris.

"*Mon Dieu*, and do you think that I don't mean it?" St. Eloi had asked in great astonishment. "*Mon cher*, I always meant it — I began to mean it when I was too young to know what I meant."

Dagobert had laughed at that and they had forthwith retired to sleep it off.

But the next day St. Eloi — after a most egregious speech at the door of the brougham of a great lady who had ceased to be beautiful before he was born — had felt some further explanation due to his friend's tendency to sincerity.

"When I came to really love," he had said, "I knew how to make her happy, for I was an adept at love-making."

Dagobert looked at him and said nothing. He had not then heard of Madame la Comtesse.

"You will halt and stumble," St. Eloi continued. "When you fall on your knees you will tear her lace."

"She will see, at least, that I have never been in the habit of falling on my knees," the other young man had replied.

"Pah, she will not think of that — she will think of her lace."

"Perhaps — if she is French," the American had said.

"French," the Frenchman had said. "What has the country to do with it? It is the gown that will vex her — and the explanation to her husband."

"To her husband!" cried Dagobert. "Do you think I would make love to a married woman?"

St. Eloi nodded. "Of course," he answered. "Life would be too *bête* if it were not so."

Dagobert felt hotly, but refrained. St. Eloi was a "liberal education" indeed.

A day later the countess in all her glory had burst upon them in the Bois, and the American, to his infinite amazement, had not been able to make even a beginning at a proper tabulation of vices and virtues, when the pretty young woman had promptly deserted her carriage to walk between him and St. Eloi. Nothing could be more charming than her face, figure and fascinations. It caused one's principles to crack at their base and settle into bewilderingly novel forms. But the day after when it rained and the general returned unexpectedly from Tonkin-China, and St. Eloi remade every plan that he had planned with a haste that was feverish — ah, then Dagobert's conscience had its innings. On the Brussels train he even went so far as to discourse on various moral ideals to his friend and the latter seemed touched by his interest — even though he was writing a note in pencil on his knee at the same time.

"You are too sincere," he said once, looking up most earnestly; "you are really clever — but too sincere."

Dagobert laughed at his tone of remonstrance.

"It is fortunate that you are of a country where there is only dishonesty — never diplomacy — for you could not be dishonest and you are not diplomatic."

St. Eloi said these words with well-weighted emphasis.

"Am I not diplomatic with you?"

"With me!" said St. Eloi, opening his eyes, "but *mon ami*, one-half of the time I amuse you and the rest of the time you wish that you might despise me only that you like me much too well."

The words were so stunning in the conciseness of their exposition that for an instant Dagobert knew not what to say; then he laughed.

"And yet I love you," said St. Eloi, with a glance that nursed truth in its reflection, "and I wish you might learn that a little graceful bending does only good to the straightest back. So!"

After that their bon camaraderie had flowed on without a ripple until the day before the present day when they had arrived in Hanover and at once quarreled over a Hanoverian princess who had been dead two hundred years, Dagobert standing up for the justice of her punishment and St. Eloi (who was becoming horribly lonesome for his countess) standing up for the justice of her love. "A brute for a husband," he said, "and of course, a lover always follows." Which premise Dagobert, even though he now knew all about the countess himself, denied with fierceness.

"My friend," said St. Eloi, "you lead me to pray heartily that the first hand you may kiss will wear a wedding-ring."

Dagobert was so close to being really vexed that he would not trust himself to speak.

"You are young," said St. Eloi, "and extremely foolish. Theory and practice are indistinguishable to you. But wait!"

"Yes, I'll wait," said his friend, "but you'll see. A right-minded man in my country doesn't fall in love with another man's wife ——"

"Except in the newspapers," reminded St. Eloi.

"The set in the newspapers aren't the whole country; they're a long way off."

"They may be a long way off, but love is always near," said the Frenchman. "You are young; you are seven months younger than I. Seven months ago I was as stupid as you are now. Yes — that's true."

"It's a pity you didn't stay so," said Dagobert.

"A pity!" St. Eloi arose and went and looked out upon the Platz. "A pity! Oh, you stupid, stupid brute! Only wait."

Then Dagobert had laughed and they had both undressed and gone to bed, being very tired from the journey. The next morning dawned beautifully and St. Eloi came out of the dressing-room at an early hour and went in among his own belongings.

"I'm off now," he called presently, "and from the consul's office I go direct to Herrenhausen. What will you do?"

"Go to the bank," Dagobert called back.

St. Eloi approached the connecting door.

"I think that you will need identification at the bank," he said kindly. "Better cash a cheque here in the hotel; they know me in the office. Or I'll lend you some money."

"I never borrow," said Dagobert. "I promised my father. I've a letter of credit, anyhow — I don't bother with cheques. So that's all straight."

"Very good," said St. Eloi, and departed. He was going away for the day and Dagobert was very glad, for he was thoroughly weary and turned over at once and went to sleep again.

He did not waken until nearly noon, and then he remembered with a sudden coming to his senses that the German banks close between one and three. As a matter of fact, each German town is a law unto itself as to the time when its banks close, but he only recalled one occasion when he had arrived somewhere at one o'clock and been forced to remain poverty-stricken for two mortal hours. The vividness of his recollections prodded him to a more than ordinarily hasty toilet and the instant that he was finished he sought his letter of credit. He had meant to go to the bank the afternoon before and had had the whole bill-book with him. He looked through the pockets of that suit, and the bill-book was gone.

As soon as he fully realized what had occurred he instituted a search which has seldom been equaled and never surpassed as to thoroughness; and then when he was certain that the bill-book was gone he sank into a chair and sat there, staring and glaring — and would have been swearing, too, had he not been so angry.

Among all the new sensations aroused in the human soul by foreign travel, that which he was experiencing is perhaps the most acute. It penetrates every fiber, mental and physical, dulls the past and — for the moment — completely drowns the future. The con-

fusion of one's churned-up thoughts is invariably redoubled by the cyclonic appearance of one's belongings. The larger one's wardrobe the more clothes strew the floor; the larger one's collection of personal luxuries the more of such articles are to be seen about upside down and inside out; and the more orderly one is in the habit of being the more completely disordered one must be under the existing circumstances. Dagobert had gone among his own on the principle of a dachshund, and his own lay witness to the fidelity of the imitation — the bedroom and the dressing-room were both piled up with raiment and sprinkled with footgear, and in the midst of all sat the unhappy young man, gripping his clenched fingers behind his head and gnawing first one end of his mustache and then the other as he tried in vain to think what he could have done with the missing bill-book.

St. Eloi was, of course, far on his way to Herrenhausen by this time. But he could not have helped, anyhow. Dagobert was glad he was gone and out of the way so that he could battle alone with his problem. If he had to lose all his financial backing at once and so suddenly, he was just as well pleased to have a little free time for consideration. Noon found St. Eloi at Herrenhausen and Dagobert in the midst of the chaos of his wardrobe. Of course, it was inevitable that he could not churn them about forever and so he finally went over to a big chair and sank into it and strove to rally his thoughts — for he was young enough to take it all most seriously.

After the first shock of losing all one's financial assets is over the usual course is to notify the bank

of the loss, letters of credit being notably ephemeral and forever apt to take wing at unexpected moments. The bank duly notified, one has next to cable home for money with which to stem poverty's rising tide. Dagobert knew all this and contemplated the humiliation of the proceeding with extreme bitterness, even while he rose from the chair to ring for coffee and take another dive among his pockets. He felt as if he could *not* go out and confess himself at once so idiotic or so careless. But then he further felt that he would have no alternative course. And then he grit his teeth and swore madly, "Never, never, *never!*"

The *garçon* came in while he was swearing and brought the morning paper with the coffee. He surveyed the room in unconcealed amazement, and asked if gracious sir would like the chambermaid at once. Gracious sir declined the chambermaid, and so the coffee-tray was deposited upon a table and peace reigned again.

Dagobert, left alone, approached the tray, poured out a cup of coffee, broke the shell of one egg with such vigor that he wished he hadn't, and then opened the paper and looked with disgust upon the news of the day as presented in the curly type of German letters. The various comings and goings of royalties and the local editorials could not be expected to divert a young American whom Fate had suddenly cast into the bottommost pit of despair, and he turned page after page in vain to see if the hyphenated New-York that is *au fait* in Europe had been doing anything while he was asleep that would make him forget his personal woes. But alas, all

was in vain; the more he strove to find new interests in life the more the gloom of his own situation seemed to deepen and the acknowledgment of his loss, which would have to be presently cabled to his father, loomed ever more distastefully before him.

Suddenly he put down his coffee-cup and made a final dash for his overcoat. He thought that he remembered having thrust the bill-book into his outside overcoat pocket when he made an end of his ticket at the station, and of having transferred it to its proper place in the inside pocket after his arrival at the hotel. But all in vain! It was not there.

He came back with a heavier frown than ever and reopened the paper in a new place. The first thing that his eyes fell on was an advertisement written in English, set up in Latin type and heavily leaded:

WANTED INSTANTLY — An original gentleman, speaking perfect English. Apply as quickly as possible to Mrs. Carpenter, Wienerhof, Hildesheim.

"Now what under heaven is 'an original gentleman'?" was Dagobert's first thought, and the next was that the situation offered would just save him from all the pressing difficulties of his predicament. "Of course she expects to pay for the desired originality," he reflected gleefully, "and I'll apply and get paid. I don't know what she wants, but I'll bet I can do it and then I won't have to cable for money or say a word to a soul about what's the matter."

He re-read the advertisement as he thought these thoughts, and his enthusiasm increased momentarily.

St. Eloi would see how an American shines forth in an hour of need, and also incidentally he would have some sport.

"Mrs. Carpenter's American, too, of course," he said to himself, for one need travel only a little way into the jungle of foreign habits to learn forever that the women of those lands never for one second dream of departing outside the bounds of conventionality, or at least, if they do so, they make it an invariable rule to accomplish their end unsigned.

"'An original gentleman'!" said Dagobert again, "'an original gentleman'? What does she mean? What does she want? What does she expect to get? And when she gets it what does she expect to do with it or to have it do for her?"

Then he entirely forgot the letter of credit and all his consequent tribulation for the moment and became his usual self again.

"I might put on a mackintosh over my pajamas, shave off half of my mustache, hire a baby-wagon and go to Mrs. Carpenter that way," he declared. "I wonder if that would strike her as original. Oh, by George, what a jolly lark! I believe I'll —!" And with the declaration he rose and went and looked out of the window. It was a clear, bright October day — a splendid day to go on an adventure of any sort.

Dagobert's nature was the kind that rebounds easily, and he only remembered now that he had thirty or forty marks still in his purse and that St. Eloi was gone for the day. The double souvenir raised his spirits to such an extent that he felt sure that whatever he had lost would surely be found by the cham-

bermaid, and so he gave up all idea of notifying the bank, tore out the advertisement, and proceeded at once to terminate his toilet. There was some of it done, but considerable left to do, and all the while that he was washing and brushing, and booting and shirting, and buttoning and studding, and tying and scarf-pinning, he was thinking, "What is 'an original gentleman'?" and anticipating eagerly the finding out.

When he was finally finished dressing he looked through his pockets and found that added to the loose change he also had a one hundred-mark note left. Twenty-five dollars is a sum whose possibilities are larger across the waters than here, and he felt quite rich at once. He therefore sallied gaily forth in quest of information as to the whereabouts of, and means of communication with, Hildesheim, a place which dwelt vaguely among his souvenirs as cited for something by Baedeker in that part of the book that comes just after "Hotels" and which a man reads when he can't yawn any more and still has two hours to ride before getting there.

The hotel *portier* told him he could go to Hildesheim by train or by tram. That sounded simple. The tram sounding simpler, he decided to go that way. Dagobert had by this time so far recovered his usual superabundant spirits that when he arrived at the Theaterplatz just in time to see the Hildesheim tram sliding out of sight it did not depress him to learn that there would not be another for half an hour. He used the half-hour to take a walk around the Leine Schloss, and leaned for some time upon the balustrade that runs beyond the moat reflecting upon

the French standard of honor which had led St. Eloi to stand up for Sophia Dorothea. Sophia Dorothea — be it said *en passant* — was the wife of George the First of England, the pretty princess of Celle who was married at sixteen to that most unpleasant of Hanoverian princes. The young American knew the story, which, however much one may differ from St. Eloi's moral views, is certainly sad enough to command all sympathy. Up in the Alte Schloss, in a suite now practically no more, the windows of which once gave upon the waters that flowed below Dagobert's eyes, Sophia Dorothea, crown princess of Hanover, lived and loved; and it was in a hall of the same wing, still existing, that Königsmark, leaving her on that early morn that ended their night of plans for elopement, was set upon and murdered by four men, the hirelings of her father-in-law's mistress. The story goes that they flung his body into a hole and showered quicklime down thick upon it, and the next day Sophia Dorothea waited and waited for the hour that was to bring her freedom. Toward night they barred her doors and sealed her papers, and the next day they told her Königsmark was dead. The people of Hanover crowded around the castle gates, those very gates that lay to left and right of the placid stranger who scorned illegal love, and the emissaries of kings and emperors plied the old Elector and his Hanoverian ministers for keys to the mysteries within, but no answer was for them. In the midst of the troubles and confusion the unhappy princess looked her last upon the peaceful Leine, and was carried prisoner to Ahlden, where she died some thirty years later. When the Schloss was

rebuilt during the present century they found Königsmark's skeleton and signet ring in an oubliette. And so ends the reality of that which St. Eloi found so natural and which Dagobert so hotly condemned.

"She was married," he thought now, looking down into the flowing waters. "I don't see how the idea ever begins to get into a married woman's head!" Then he carried his meditations on a bit further and wondered how a decent fellow ever justified himself in his own eyes if he became conscious of admiring a married woman and didn't decamp out of the field of fight right then and there.

After awhile he walked around the castle and back to the tram waiting-place and found the Hildesheimer-Bahn to be there now, waiting, and ready to convey him to Hildesheim. He got in and prepared (by crossing his legs) for a twenty minutes' ride. I might say piously, "heaven help him!" only heaven never helps any one who starts from Hanover to Hildesheim by tram.

It was a full hour and a half before Dagobert and his burning impatience finally arrived at the end of that particular line. Our friend lost no time in promptly flying out of his cage, and although there was another tram which would have gladly borne him to his destination either in its first or second-class end, he felt that he had had a plenteous sufficiency of that form of travel, and so took a cab. On the way up he remembered what Baedeker had said about Hildesheim and its timber architecture, and looked ahead and on either side to the full extent of his optical powers. The streets were narrow and crooked, and every one was a good study in rapidly

diminishing perspective. The houses projected with each story and the roofs were delightful. Dagobert was neither artist nor antiquarian, but he enjoyed his ride, and felt that the setting for whatever was about to happen would be worthy of it — whatever it might turn out to be.

The cab adapted itself most marvelously to the exigencies of the situation, which consisted mainly of dachshunds, street-car tracks, babies and unexpected corners, all apparently enjoying the right of way over vehicles. Dagobert admired the cabman's good temper, until he recollected that he was German.

Finally they penetrated a peculiarly narrow street where nothing could ever by any chance get by anything if ever they should by ill-luck encounter there; and on rounding a curve, came full upon some outwork of the Wienerhof itself.

The Wienerhof is one of Hildesheim's brightest jewels of antiquity. It stands corner-ways on a very narrow street, and its windows and door-step encroach yet further upon that same narrowness. It has glass panes in plenty in every window and wood carving runs over their tops — a wonderful old carving which echoes the naïve art of the first New England Primer. The dear, quaint windows all open inward, and those on the first floor are full of long-leaved plants and look directly on the café — or the street; it all depends on whether you are in the street or in the café!

The cab stopped in front of the door and Dagobert got out and paid the driver. Then he went into the small, square mediæval hall, which was dark and had coats hanging on a rack, and bags expecting to

travel soon piled up by the door; a carved table with a carved bench stood in the light, a second in the shadow and a third in the dark, and a bell with "*Bedienung*" over it showed its little white face in the midst of some black oak paneling to the left.

"I expect to be *bedient*," thought Dagobert, and rang it at once.

The kling-klinkle of the bell brought the head waiter, or, in German parlance, the *Oberkellner*, out of that one of the Wienerhof chain of restaurants which lies first beyond the entrance-hall. The *Oberkellner* was a large, stout man with the most rosy, responsible and joyous of countenances. He looked as if he had washed his face in the milk of human kindness, and superintended the Wienerhof for the pure pleasure of the thing, until a complexion perfect in all ways had resulted. When he saw Dagobert his smile deepened from that of one who is without a wish to that of one who has long had a wish and now beholds its longed-for fulfilment. Dagobert, standing flooded in the effulgence resultant, inquired for Mrs. Carpenter.

Immediately the *Oberkellner's* radiance passed all earthly bounds and entered those heavenly realms reserved for such as are feed by the generous. He smiled upon the stranger with the welcome kept for the friends of those same generous individuals, and, praying the gracious sir to have the goodness to be patient only one or two minutes, went personally to inform the gracious lady of his arrival. Dagobert tried in vain to divine from his manner whether he himself was the first, last, or only "original gentleman" who had so far appeared, but before he had

had leisure to canvass the outside precincts of the idea the *Oberkellner* returned and prayed him forthwith to ascend two flights to No. 44. Dagobert ascended, and a chambermaid who was wiping the wainscoting showed him the door of No. 44. He felt an interested excitement as he saw that the door was standing wide open, and inferred that the solution of the riddle was just beyond, but when he came square in front of the door he perceived that the room was empty. Mrs. Carpenter had apparently retired to some other apartment, but he knew that he had been announced, and he knew that she had bidden him upstairs, so he went over by the casement window and looked out — and waited.

His view lay up the Wollenweberstrasse — once the street of the Wool Weavers' Guild; or, rather, it lay up the extremely narrow entrance that leads into the other more pretentious quarter. Dagobert found a species of soporific for his uncommonly active imaginings in gazing upon the quiet and placid desertion of so small a way. He could not but —

"Oh, I'm *so* glad you're a gentleman!" exclaimed a voice behind him.

It certainly gave him an awful start, for whatever he had been expecting he certainly had not expected a voice like that. He could not have catalogued it at the minute, but he knew that it was altogether the sweetest voice which he had ever heard. The awful start occurring simultaneously with that whirl on the heel which etiquette prescribes for a gentleman when a lady speaks to him from behind his back, it followed that one and one-half seconds after first hearing her voice Dagobert first saw the face of — of —

(oh, shades of Königsmark, St. Eloi and all the rest of the list!)—

"Mrs. Carpenter?" he said interrogatively.

"Yes," she answered, holding out her hand.

So it was so. Of course he had to take her word for it or he could never have believed it — for Mrs. Carpenter looked to be a girl of eighteen — less rather than more. She was a little creature, under five feet surely, fairylike in proportions, her hair just dark enough and just light enough, her eyes just blue enough and just gray enough, her lashes just black enough and just long enough, her mouth just ——

"Sit straight down," said Mrs. Carpenter. "We haven't a second to waste."

She spoke in the imperative tone of one who is thoroughly accustomed to command, and Dagobert never dreamed for a second of disobeying her. He took a chair and she perched on the sofa in a way that made him sure she was sitting on one foot, and then she clasped her hands and began to talk.

"I'm so glad you're a gentleman," she said again. "The first two were couriers and then came a teacher from the Berlitz School. I don't see, I'm sure, what they thought I wanted. I said distinctly 'an original gentleman.' I should think that that was plain enough, but no one seemed quite to understand my meaning."

Dagobert felt that a discreet silence was wisest at the minute, and so said nothing. She immediately continued:

"But I mustn't take up any time complaining. Mr. Carpenter won't be gone much longer and we

must have everything arranged before he comes back. If he were to come back before it would be all up with me, you know."

It is needless to deny that this statement startled her caller more than a little, although he was so far unaware of the damage she had already done him as to be mainly perturbed on her account.

"Mr. Carpenter is really a very singular man," she went on. "If I'd known just how singular he is I don't believe I'd ever have come to Europe with him — I don't, indeed." She looked very seriously at Dagobert as she said that, and the clock seized the opportunity to strike three.

"Oh, dear," she exclaimed then, "I mustn't take up any more time talking that way; I must tell you right off what I need. You *are* original — aren't you? And you will help me, won't you? You know that's why I advertised." She paused and looked appealingly at him.

Dagobert felt himself regretting having left his pocket revolver in Hanover, but her appeal made him cease to feel and start to answer — only she did not give him a chance, after all.

"Oh, but you know you will," she continued at once, "so there's no use taking up time talking about it. I'll get right to the main subject. The main subject is Mr. Carpenter. It won't take but twenty-four hours and you can have all the money you want — we're ever so rich — only it must be done pleasantly, and to tell you the truth he isn't always very pleasant and he's never ——"

She stopped short and lifted one finger.

"Goodness, there he is now!" she cried beneath her breath.

Before Dagobert had time to think or speak she had darted behind him, opened a door, pushed him through into the next room, and shut it behind him. A man does not have to be very remarkable to have known some precedents, printed or practical, of such situations, and Dagobert's bewilderment would have turned into the behavior of betrayed and enlightened innocence at once had it not been for two circumstances which precluded all action. One was that Mrs. Carpenter had not about her one bit of the evil mental aroma which marks an adventuress, and the other was that the room into which she had so suddenly thrust her caller was already occupied by a maid, who was placidly engaged in sitting on the bed and mending a lace dress. The maid gave a muffled squeal at this sudden invasion of her privacy, and before Dagobert had hardly had time to recover his equilibrium from the force of Mrs. Carpenter's push, by grabbing the washstand, the door opened and Mrs. Carpenter looked in — a bit pale, but smiling.

"It wasn't he," she said. "Come back!"

Dagobert returned to the other room. He felt completely denuded of personal volition and utterly helpless in the hands of Fate.

"Dear me, but that gave me a fright," she said, as she closed the door of the room where the maid was, and returned to her former perch on the sofa. "Why, if that had been Mr. Carpenter and he had found you — but we won't waste time talking about it. We mustn't lose one minute. I must tell you what I want and you must think whether you can do it — that is always the way people do who advertise

for help — isn't it? Never mind answering, because it will just take time and we haven't a second to spare. But you see it is this way; we were in Berlin at the Bristol — were you ever there? — such a nice hotel, isn't it? — and baths for nothing. It's the only place in Europe where you can wash for nothing — that and Hillman's in Bremen, and the Hotel Heck in Gerolstein — only some one told me the other day that they charge for baths at Hillman's now. But I must hurry — where was I? Oh, yes, so we were in Berlin, and Tiny — that's my sister — took it into her head to get her things in Vienna, and she knew Mr. Carpenter wouldn't like it — he often doesn't like Tiny's ways anyway, — he says she isn't a bit like me — and so she went off without saying a word to him, and left us all her extra trunks and her hat-box of summer hats and the dog and everything, and when Mr. Carpenter woke up he was really vexed indeed; and when he found out about the trunks he was angry, and when he found out about the dog he was awfully mad, and then Tiny had taken Madame with her — because of course she couldn't go alone, and she had taken Nita, too, because she can't do her own hair or hook up her back, and Antonio, because he always sees to everything when we travel. And that left us in Berlin without Madame and me without Nita, and I can't hook up my back any more than Tiny can hers; and it left us all without Antonio, and he's so useful, and with the dog — Mr. Carpenter just despises the dog — and he can't shave himself — Antonio always shaves him, and — oh, well, I haven't time to go into all the details but ——"

She paused abruptly, listened with her head on one side, and then, before Dagobert had time even to gauge what was to come by the light of the past, there was a second cry, a second shove, and he found himself back with the maid again just as the hall door creaked on its hinges.

This time he felt really out of patience with his own folly, for he had to surmise that something very out of the way indeed was forming itself about him.

A man's voice sounded in the next room. The maid, looking somewhat distressed, motioned him to sit down. There seemed nothing else to do, so he sat down, wondering what would happen to him next. The man's voice continued to rumble indistinctly in the next room, and the listener listened acutely and wondered if he were really destined ever to see Hanover again. And yet there blent with his anxieties the oddest possible sentiment of resignation as to seeing the thing through.

Five minutes passed, during which the voices in the next room rose and fell and the man's alternated with Mrs. Carpenter's in what appeared to be, on the whole, a reasonably even basis. Then a door closed and the next instant that of the bedroom opened, and Mrs. Carpenter looked in, smiling.

"What a dear, patient fellow you are," she said to Dagobert. "I'm awfully sorry to treat you this way, but you see I've been through so much with Mr. Carpenter this week that I can't help being wretchedly nervous. Come back now and I won't waste another minute, for there honestly isn't another minute to waste."

Dagobert returned to the other room and started slightly at its changed appearance.

"You see that wasn't Mr. Carpenter," said Mrs. Carpenter pleasantly; "it was the laundryman. I had to check the list because Félice can't speak German. She wouldn't know what a *Leibchen* is, and the man wouldn't know what a *jupon* was, so of course I come in for the whole list." She glanced around at the white piles which covered every piece of furniture in the room and then shrugged her shoulders. "Isn't our laundry something terrific? — all in one week, too. But a lot of those skirts and things are Tiny's — they aren't all mine, by any means. Just put that pile of blouses on the trunk over there and sit down again. I wanted to tell you that it was the laundryman, but I thought if I opened the door and he saw you he would surely think you looked queer, and one doesn't like to have things look queer, you know. And people in Europe are so ready to think queer things. Not but what I think an American laundryman would think you looked funny in there with Félice."

Dagobert refrained from answering this last observation. He felt strongly that his time to talk had not yet come. He picked up the blouses and laid them on the trunk as commanded, and then he sat down again. Mrs. Carpenter did likewise and looked at her watch.

"Oh, heavens," she said, "it's 'most half-past three, and he only drove to the Galgenberg. He'll really be here any minute now. I *must* hurry. Where was I, anyhow?"

"In Berlin," volunteered Dagobert.

"Was I? Oh, thank you so much. Well, we couldn't stay in Berlin, of course, because of ever so

many things, and I couldn't shop with Tiny in Vienna (Tiny and I are twins; don't you think Mr. Carpenter might let us shop together anyhow?) I did want to go to Paris. Paris is such a good place to shop, you know. And I am having a lot — an awful lot — of winter clothes made there; but do you know, Mr. Carpenter was *so* vexed over Antonio, and he kept getting more vexed and then only last Friday he suddenly remembered that a steamer sails from Bremen every week, and he had them telegraph and get rooms for us on tomorrow's boat, and he says we are to go to Bremen tomorrow morning and sail from there tomorrow afternoon! He never told me until yesterday on the train when I thought we were on the train going straight towards Paris, and you cannot imagine how desperate I felt. The more I felt the more desperate I felt, and some of our trunks went on without us and that made it worse yet. I have some skirts without waists and hats that don't match shoes, and the dog has only his little black jacket, and all the umbrellas were left in the train. How can we get those things home without paying duty if we don't have them with us? And then there are my things being made in Paris — I declare I was half-mad all last night with thinking of it and about one o'clock I couldn't think of it any longer, so I just got up and rang for the waiter and I wrote an advertisement and had it — Mercy on us!"

An awful rap at the door!

There was no time to put Dagobert anywhere, for the door opened at the same instant.

It is impossible to detail any of the sensations which

took place in the room during the brief space of time that it took to open the door; but when the door was opened nothing more formidable appeared than a hand, holding out four letters on a plate, this being the usual way in which mail is delivered into the rooms at the Wienerhof.

"Oh, *dear*," said Mrs. Carpenter, as she went to get the letters, "I'm afraid he thought something queer or he'd have come in all over. But never mind, we haven't time to discuss appearances. Two or three more scares *can't* happen without one's being Mr. Carpenter, and if Mr. Carpenter does come ——"

She went back to the sofa and knotted herself thereon again in what Dagobert was fain to consider as her favorite attitude.

"Now we must talk real seriously," she said, looking earnestly across at him; "now comes *your* part. I can see you're a gentleman, and you must have some reason for thinking you're original or you wouldn't have answered the advertisement. So I want you to see if you can't see a way out for me. I simply *can't* go to Bremen to-morrow — I have *got* to go to Paris. Mr. Carpenter *must* be kept from sailing from Bremen and you *must* be the one to keep him. It's got to be you because you are the only gentleman who has come — I've to trust you are original — I hope you are. Do you think you are?"

She paused, and Dagobert had his first real chance to speak since he had entered the room. He sat dumb in the face of it. He felt thoroughly and completely done up. For the nonce he did not know whether he was dead or alive — awake or dreaming.

"Well," said Mrs. Carpenter, "surely you aren't

going back on me? Where did you see the advertisement, anyhow?"

"In a Hanover paper," said Dagobert, dry-throatedly.

"Well, of course; I didn't advertise in any other papers; but I mean where were you yourself?"

"In Hanover," said Dagobert.

Mrs. Carpenter looked at him quickly and anxiously.

"Oh, poor me!" she cried. "You sound stupid, and if you really are stupid, what under the sun am I to do?"

There was a real despair and nerve-thrilling appeal in her voice that stung her hearer to the quick. No young man who has hitherto considered himself bright likes to be suddenly confronted with the accusation of stupidity. And Dagobert was also conscious of a mad resentment at having this one woman justified in calling him stupid. Whatever he might have been called by others he would *not* be called stupid by her. Something within him throbbed and pulsed as nothing had ever throbbed or pulsed before. He felt it, prayed that it was the genius of originality, and under its impulse sprang to the defense of — Mrs. Carpenter.

"Don't worry," he begged passionately; "leave all to me. I'll help you out or die helping."

"How?" she asked.

"I'll see."

He hadn't an idea what he was going to do, but he knew that he was going to do something. She looked at him and her eyes widened and shone in a strangely attractive manner.

"Oh, I'm so glad," she exclaimed; "I know you can help me. But you'll want money," she added quickly. "You must be poor or you wouldn't have come, you know."

"That's true," said Dagobert, promptly. "I lost my letter of credit this morning."

"Oh, never mind making up any story as to why you're poor," said Mrs. Carpenter easily; "we know just how it is. Mr. Carpenter lent money to seven Americans who had lost their letters of credit just in the little while that we were in Berlin — and to nineteen who could pay him back the instant they reached Paris. Nobody's ever really poor in Europe."

"I hope to heaven I'm not," Dagobert laughed; "but I really can't see where it's gone, so I'm awfully afraid that I am."

She looked at him quickly and concernedly.

"There, now, I'm afraid I hurt your feelings," she said; "but I didn't mean to. And you mustn't let Mr. Carpenter know you're without money or he'll take a dislike to you. He lent some money to an American with inflammatory rheumatism, in one place where we were, and it turned out that the man was only intoxicated and they'd taken away his money so that he couldn't buy anything to drink. He had delirium tremens just because Mr. Carpenter had given him that money, and so now he won't give even a beggar a penny. I want him to think you're rich; how much would it take to make a man rich for one day, do you think?"

"Nothing," said Dagobert. "You can do it on credit."

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Carpenter. "Mr. Carpenter isn't that kind. You can't do anything with him on credit — you must really spend money. I'll give you a thousand marks, shall I?"

"All right," said Dagobert — who was beginning to feel himself more and more enthused with what he took to be the spirit of the hour; "give me the thousand marks and I'll take a room and — " He hesitated; he knew there was a phrase which should come in here, but it was a moment before he could think of it; then it came to him. "Leave all to me," he said in a tone the assurance of which astonished even himself.

"Remember, you have only tonight and tomorrow morning," said Mrs. Carpenter. "Whatever do you suppose you can do?"

"I don't know," said Dagobert; "I'll begin by consulting the head waiter — they always have ideas."

"It's no use trying to make him ill," said Mrs. Carpenter. "I could have done that myself, but he'll go even if he's carried. I thought, too, of locking him up in the Andreaskirche — they're very obliging about letting one have the key alone — but Mr. Carpenter isn't the man to stay locked up anywhere. He'd break a window and get right out."

"They'd arrest him climbing out," said Dagobert; "not for climbing out, you know, but for breaking the window."

"Oh, no, they wouldn't," said Mrs. Carpenter; "he never gets arrested. He looks as if he was somebody incognito, and they don't dare bother the incognitos in countries with kings. It's so different

from a republic, where incognitos are only called aliases, you know."

"But a restored church window?" he reminded her.

"It wouldn't make any difference with Mr. Carpenter — he just walks across tracks and gets off trains anywhere and does what he pleases. He was raised so. They spoiled him. You'll see."

Dagobert opened his mouth to reply, but just at that instant the door opened and in walked Mr. Carpenter!

II

IT was the most natural thing under the sun, considering the circumstances, that Dagobert should have felt his heart give a sudden leap.

Even as it leapt its owner rose to face Mr. Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter was a large, imposing-looking man with pompadour hair, fierce round eyes, the mustache of a trooper, and the imperial of the third Napoleon. He was carefully and correctly attired, had a silk hat in his left hand and a heavy, knotted walking-stick in his right. There was absolutely nothing omitted from his appearance that could have further borne out his ideal portrait as sketched toward the end of the last chapter.

Dagobert dared not look at Mrs. Carpenter; he felt more inclined to throw himself in front of her. He didn't stop to think why, but if he had he would probably have called it chivalry, a name which the Middle Ages coined at a time when men on horseback were accustomed to find expression for their feelings before they had time to get down. *They* called it chivalry, and Dagobert would probably have done the same — just at that moment.

Mr. Carpenter stood looking to left and right with a fierce military glance, for an extremely long quarter of a minute. Dagobert remained erect directly

opposite him, and Mrs. Carpenter continued sitting upon the sofa. She looked more puzzled than frightened — in fact, she did not appear frightened at all. After a little her husband put his hat upon the table and announced with equal brevity and emphasis:

"I've lost the dog!"

His wife clapped her hands.

"Oh, goody!" she exclaimed. "How pleased Félice will be. Only," her tone altered sadly, "what a pity that she had just washed him! She so hates to wash him." Then she looked at Dagobert, and he fancied a certain helplessness in her glance, in spite of the outward composure.

He also felt a sort of tightening all through his nervous system; the moment had evidently come to introduce him. Of course Mrs. Carpenter knew not his name nor one thing about him; he felt all breathlessness to see how she would extricate them both from so dire a mire.

But she was equal to the hour.

"Oh, Mr. Carpenter," she said in a tone that was a triumph of blithesomeness, all things considered, "this is a gentleman whom Tiny begged to call on us if he ran across us, Prince — Prince — what *did* you say your name was?" she interrupted, turning to Dagobert. "You know how hard it is to pronounce Russian."

Dagobert's mentality swung around with a swing of which only some other ardent admirer of the Japanese can measure the force. A Russian! He! Great heavens!

Then self-control — he called it that — came to his aid, and he bowed a bow that he had learned one time in a minuet given for charity, and said:

"Dagobert Henryvich, of New Polsk — at your service."

He looked at Mrs. Carpenter as he regained an upright position, and divined by the light in her eyes that he had done well, but that they were both probably in for it now.

Mr. Carpenter covered the intervening floor space in two steps and shook hands warmly with the caller.

"My sympathy is with you," he said; "sit down."

Dagobert sat down helplessly. Mrs. Carpenter remained perched as usual in the corner of the sofa. Mr. Carpenter sat down, too.

"He saw Tiny in Dresden," said Mrs. Carpenter, evidently feeling that explanations *à trois* would be wisest. "She was just going down and he was just coming through. She sent her love to us all."

"I hope she was quite well?" Mr. Carpenter asked, with some latent grimness. "I needn't inquire if she was enjoying herself, I know."

"I had the pleasure of being with her only for a very few minutes," said Dagobert with tremendous caution. "You see, we were both travelers."

"Yes, the most of your class of Russians are traveling just now, if I understand things rightly," said the husband. "By the way, though, do you know you are the first Russian I ever met that I've ever really liked the looks of? They're generally too black and curly for me. But you might be an American for all your looks say."

"I am often taken for an American," Dagobert confessed; "it pleases me very much."

"I should think it would," said Mr. Carpenter. "If I were Russian I'd be very pleased to be taken for anything — even a Chinaman — these days."

"This is no time for me to begin to show spirit," thought Dagobert, and tried to look meek over so strong a thrust at the country to which he was supposed to belong.

"I told you I lost the dog, didn't I?" Mr. Carpenter said, now turning to Mrs. Carpenter. "I told you this noon at dinner that I bet I could do it if anyone could, and now I've done it."

"How did you do it?" she asked with real interest.

"Oh, I kept a sharp eye out and took an alley home. This is a great place for alleys," he continued, turning to Dagobert; "you can find them anywhere, and the difference between these and the French ones is that in Germany they're all short cuts, while in France they're all stopped up at the other end."

"I should have thought that the dog could have traced you," Dagobert said.

"He wasn't smart enough," said Mr. Carpenter. "He's one of those fool dogs that women exhibit in shows and that look like mongrels on the street."

"The prince had only just come in when you did," said Mrs. Carpenter now, "and I do wish you'd ask him if he's staying here long?"

"No, I'm staying here only a short time," said Dagobert. "I'm going on tomorrow."

"Where?" she asked, and then stared because Mr. Carpenter looked so very peculiar.

"Don't I hear the dog?" he asked.

Someone rapped, and when they cried "*Herein!*" it was the *Oberkellner*, fairly radiating joy, with the dog in his arms.

"Oh, dear," said Mrs. Carpenter distressedly, "you ought to have told him that you didn't want him found."

At that the dog's owner rose abruptly and quitted the room. The instant the door closed Dagobert felt himself irresistibly drawn toward Mrs. Carpenter — he thought now that it was because he did not wish to be overheard, and that was reason enough to satisfy him for the present. As a matter of fact, the effect of having seen her husband was so overpowering that he was conscious of a strange craving to fly out of the window with her forthwith. But he only moved his chair a little — a very little — toward her sofa.

"Why *did* you make me a Russian prince?" he asked hurriedly and despairingly. "Of all things on the face of the earth!"

"I couldn't think of anything to say," she replied in a hurry and despair quite equaling his own, "and you see I never hesitate and never stutter, so what could I do? I had to say something right off."

"But how can I live up to it?" Dagobert felt impelled to demand.

"If you fail me I'll never forgive you!" she declared, and her tone thrilled him with a sentiment which he now had no doubt was the common manifestation of strength succoring weakness.

There was a second's silence, and a sound to be heard in the hall.

"As soon as he comes back I'll get me a room and go straight to work," he said with vigor.

"You'll have to work very hard and very fast," she declared with conviction; then she rose quickly and went into the other room, returning almost at once with a roll of bills in her hand.

"There!" she said, "there's a thousand marks.

Spend it royally — but *right* royally — and — and do all you can for me. You will, won't you?"

She gave him her hand, a slim little bit of a white one, at the same time that she gave him the money.

"I'll poison him if there's no other way," thought Dagobert, and sentiments of what he now took to be manly heroism surged as the immediate result of her finger-tips up through his arm and from thence all over him. For one brief second he continued to hold her hand, and then he loosed it and felt weak and dizzy.

"Trust me," he said rather thickly and indistinctly, "and — au revoir."

"Au revoir," she told him very sweetly; and then he went out and fell over a man who was laying down carpet in the hall, because he was for the moment completely blinded to all things other than the new emotion that had suddenly passed out of any known index to the feelings to which he had been hitherto wont. He reached the stair in some shape and descended to the office where reigned a peace sweet, complete and entire, and in the office — which was synonymous with that same small, square medieval, little entrance-hall — he paused to pull himself together.

In the general confusion of all his thoughts, ideals and principles, only one fact stood out prominently enough to be grasped; that was that if Mrs. Carpenter wanted him to do anything he was going to do it or die in the attempt. Having laid strong hold of that first premise he ventured to lean a little further, and the next proposition — *i. e.*, what Mrs. Carpenter wanted done, came upon him much as a

landslide might have come upon John the Baptist. In fact, Dagobert felt desperately done up when he faced a clock that said four and knew that within eighteen hours he must, alone and single-handed——

Just then in walked the head waiter, roseate and beaming as usual, and at the sight of his jocund countenance our friend immediately recollected how he had told Mrs. Carpenter that head waiters always could be counted upon in times of stress. He knew also that it was true, so he launched himself upon the *Oberkellner* of the Wienerhof at once, beginning by asking him if there was a vacant bedroom to be had in the house. The *Oberkellner* walked directly to the blackboard, where every one of the guests was neatly chalked opposite room numbers, and offered him No. 45 — just beside Mrs. Carpenter. Dagobert shook his head at No. 45, so he next offered him No. 46, just opposite Mrs. Carpenter. But Dagobert also shaking his head at No. 46, the *Oberkellner* told him with a shade of regret veiling his whilom sunshine that then he would have to go on the next floor or at the other end of the house.

The regret was so unfeigned that Dagobert would certainly have noticed it had he not been so preoccupied with what he now thought was preoccupation. He wondered whether, all things considered, he would not be wisest at once to confide fully in the head waiter; so he gave him ten marks and told him that although Mr. Carpenter thought that he was a Russian prince he really was not one at all. The *Oberkellner* smiled broadly at this and said he quite understood. Dagobert thought that of course he didn't, but as a matter of fact he really understood a good

deal better than the young man himself. It isn't necessary to give a European head waiter ten marks to make him understand situations like the one with which we are now dealing. However, Dagobert didn't know enough about the situation himself to be able to size it up alone and unaided, so after the ice had been properly broken in his estimation he went on a little further, told his real name, and then took No. 4 as an American while he was marked on the blackboard as plain Dagobert Henryvich; and it must be confessed that it stood out drolly between Herr Wonnebald Linieweber, who had No. 3, and Frl. Pinkapank, who had No. 5.

As soon as that piece of business was concluded the time was at hand when real heroism must at last come to the fore.

"I suppose you can do anything if I pay you enough?" the young man said with an earnestness which was most flattering. The *Oberkellner* bowed and smiled. Dagobert thereupon took a splendid cigar out of his pocket, presented it in due form, and then made a clean breast of the whole difficulty.

"It will be worth a thousand marks to you if Madame does not have to sail from Bremen tomorrow," he said by way of conclusion. The *Oberkellner* looked fairly startled at the size of the bribe, and then his usual smile returned and slowly overspread his face.

"Gracious sir, I must ask a little time to consider," he said, almost in a tone of awe. The awe mixed oddly with the smile, and Dagobert wondered if the mixture was auspicious.

"Do you think that you can manage it?" he asked.

"Gracious sir, I must think, but I will say that I believe all things possible."

Dagobert looked at him squarely and liked his face; there was no one else to turn to or trust in, anyhow.

"Oh, by the way," he said then, "I suppose there is a private dining-room here?"

"Yes, certainly."

It occurred to the young man that it would be most delightful — and courteous — to give a little supper to his new friends that very night, so he placed that commission also with the useful *Oberkellner*, despatched a note above with the invitation, and then, remembering that he had come from Hanover with no more than the clothes upon him, felt it necessary to go out and do a little shopping without delay.

The *Oberkellner's* plan seemed to be assuming fairly favorable shape, judging from the fervor with which he urged a walk upon the guest. Dagobert secured some explicit directions as to where to go and set out at once, confident in his ability not only to get to the shops desired but also to return to the hotel in due time. But streets and turns in Hildesheim are more than a little confusing, and by the time that he had visited the third place he was so completely puzzled that he had to confess himself quite astray, and one or two more unexpected twists in a street which was uniform in nothing but its name brought him up standing in what was evidently some other division of the city.

He was in a great irregular oval of overhanging houses, and looked up at the tremendous Gothic church that filled the middle of the space. It struck

him as quite the most imposing sight that he had ever seen, partly because its side walls presented such huge spreads of unrelieved stone work, and partly because it so completely dwarfed the seven and eight-story steep-pitched roofs of the sixteenth-century structures surrounding it.

As he stood beside it an organ burst out, and the solemn melody flooded the old square with a sort of soul-sunshine. It was wonderful — it was sublime. It fitted oddly in with some new birth that seemed to have taken place for him that day. He did not just know what or where or how or why, but the music seemed to know and seemed to be bearing the whole burden of a mighty secret in the conscious strength of its diapason. He bowed his head as if he were within the church — a worshipper before its shrine, and he felt his whole being flooded with a new resolve, a new desire. After a little the music ceased and then he slowly lifted his head and there, right before him, appearing also much affected by the solemnity of the music, was Mrs. Carpenter.

She had on a gray-blue walking-suit the color of her eyes, and a hat with a bluebird standing on his head just over her left ear, also a white boa and a white muff that ended in foxes' heads and tails artistically combined. She looked most charming, and she also looked straight up at him.

"I saw you coming in here," she said pleasantly, "and so I followed. I thought that maybe you were thinking of the Andreaskirche. That's it, you know, and the museum is in the front half; but oh, dear, it never will do to try and lock him up in there. You see there isn't time for one thing. It really isn't practical — take my word for it."

Dagobert thought that even in the face of her informality it would be more the proper thing to take off his hat and shake hands, so he did. She had on a little glove of thinnest kid, and her hand was as soft and warm as a baby squirrel. He felt the organ — although it had ceased playing — thrill him all over again as he held her fingers and mighty longings to — to do *anything* for her went through him.

"Is this the Andreaskirche?" he asked, astonished at how sensible his voice sounded; and then, "Why, do you know I was lost — I didn't know what church it was, or where I was — I didn't really."

"Didn't you?" she asked, surprised. "I thought you came here on purpose to consider its feasibility. But it really isn't feasible. He must be kept in some way that doesn't look on purpose. If you arrange a way that looks on purpose he will never forgive me, and that wouldn't do, you know."

Something in her phrasing sent a dart of misery through Dagobert, who — not knowing what ailed him — thought that it was the frosty stones of the Andreasplatz, and suggested walking on.

"Let us talk about something else," he said. "You are to dine with me tonight — did you know that?"

"Oh, yes," she said; "the note came just as I was leaving. It will be awfully jolly — but *awfully* jolly."

"I most sincerely hope so," said he heartily; "but don't you think that it would be wise to seize this opportunity to post me up a bit? Couldn't we take a little walk together and — and talk, you know?"

She seemed ready to meet his proposal half-way,

and they turned and walked out of the square into a street which would have seemed narrow only that it kept on growing more so.

"Have you been over long?" he asked presently, falling back on the tamest thing that one can say in Europe, just because his tongue felt itself so beset with a crush of questions.

"A year. You see, we've had such a dreadful time with Tiny — Tiny's my sister. We didn't mean to stay so long, but Tiny never seems ready to go home. But now Mr. Carpenter has gotten tired of waiting, and he says Tiny must be in Bremen tomorrow or come alone. He's awfully good about Tiny — always lets her do just what she pleases — but *just* what she pleases. I must say that for him — he's awfully good, as a general rule. But, of course, Tiny can't sail from Bremen tomorrow when she's in Vienna and thinks we're on our way to Paris. She has Madame and Nita and Antonio with her, and she knows she's all safe and she doesn't mean to hurry. Of course we all know her ways, but that's why I want to keep him in some pleasant way that looks like an accident, if I possibly can, instead of vexing him. You see, he might be really very, very cross with me otherwise. Of course he hasn't the call to keep me good-tempered that he has Tiny — I've *got* to be good-tempered."

Dagobert felt the same sharp dart of misery again.

"What is that?" he asked, looking up at a quaint, old building because he felt that looking down would make him feel worse somehow.

"It's the Rolandstift — it's Plate B-2."

"Plate B-2!"

"Yes, in the Baedeker. You see, since Tiny took Antonio I have to look them all out in the Baedeker for Mr. Carpenter, and so I learn them all by heart — but by heart." She nodded her head, laughing, and he found her quaint little "but" and the emphasis that followed it the prettiest trick of speech that he had ever heard.

"What does '*stift*' mean?" he asked, pausing on the narrow stone sidewalk and continuing to stare up at the queer structure opposite. He thought that he wanted to study the wood carvings in the oblong spaces over doors and windows, but perhaps the fact that he had stopped his companion by catching hold of her arm had something to do with his interest.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Carpenter, looking upward, too; "ever so many things are '*stifts*' over here — but just ever so many. Rich men did it all the time. I like the carvings, don't you? I like that nice little one of Delilah and Samson in the corner — the way he lays smash up against her knee while she takes his hair off in square blocks."

"The next one is nice, too," said Dagobert. He still had hold of her arm and was astonished to feel a real understanding of the art of the Middle Ages enveloping him more and more.

"That's Samson and the gates of — but of what?" asked Mrs. Carpenter.

"Of Sodom and Gomorrah, of course," said Dagobert promptly. "Don't you remember, first he went out in the desert and rent them apart and then he carried them off?"

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Carpenter pleasantly, "of course. And there he goes with one under each arm

straight up the hill. And that next one," she continued; "that must be that man that the gourd grew — it *was* a gourd, wasn't it?" She hesitated and looked at Dagobert, who felt all his Bible history leap to her help.

"It didn't grow — it withered," he said. "It's withering there; see the flowers hanging down."

"Is a gourd a flower?" asked Mrs. Carpenter. "I thought you could fill them with water."

Dagobert pressed her arm a little to set her walking again; he felt that he was come to the end of his scriptural rope.

"Let's see the other side!" he suggested sweetly.

They walked around the corner.

"We really ought to be discussing Mr. Carpenter," said Mrs. Carpenter; "we really ought, you know."

"I am thinking of him all the time," said Dagobert. "I shall manage, don't fear; it's all planned already."

"Not really?" cried his companion, pausing short.

"Yes, really. Won't you believe me? Don't you feel that you can trust me?"

"I want to trust you," said she, looking up at him in a way that flooded him with want and trust, "but I'm afraid that, being only a man, you don't appreciate how tremendously important it is that I get to Paris. Do you mean to say that you really and truly have got it all arranged already — but *already?*"

Dagobert felt the need of a little evasion.

"I know what Paris means to women," he said. "I've been to Paris myself."

"For clothes?" Her tone was indescribable.

"No, but with women who wanted clothes."

She drew a quick, sharp breath.

"Are you *married?*" she cried, in a frightened tone.

Dagobert felt absolutely permeated with joy at the fright in her tone.

"No, no," he hastened to assure her, "no, *indeed.* I was in Paris with my mother and sisters."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Carpenter. She went on then slowly. "That's the Kaiserhaus," she said in a perfunctory tone presently; "it's Plate B-2." Then she added, "I'm *so* glad."

"But why?" asked Dagobert, "why are you glad that I am not married?"

She glanced at him briefly.

"I don't like married men," she said; "they never are nice. Look at Mr. Carpenter! And unmarried men" — she hugged her muff abruptly to her bosom, "oh, they *are* so nice!" she looked up at him out of the corners of her changeable blue eyes; "but unmarried men are *so* nice," she added. "Why, you should have seen Mr. Carpenter before he was married. He was that good to Tiny and me — but that good!"

Dagobert was silently conscious of a crushing sensation within him. They were coming out on a boulevard that stretched invitingly away.

"He's very good to Tiny yet," Mrs. Carpenter continued; "of course that goes without saying. But he's that strict with me — but that strict!"

Dagobert looked at the inviting boulevard and then his conscience rose up with overpowering force and made him take out his watch.

"What time is it?" his companion asked.

"Ten minutes past five."

"Oh," her tone was deliciously sad and regretful, "then we must go back — mustn't we?"

"I am afraid so."

"If Mr. Carpenter were *only* German!" she sighed.

"How would that help?" he asked.

"Why, he'd be taking his coffee in some café now and we could stay out and walk along this lovely boulevard."

Dagobert felt his senses swimming upward in a liquid sea of joy. She was so entrancingly, surpassingly delightful — and she wanted to stay with him! — oh, the lovely, fascinating, adorable — he sighed for more adjectives to conquer.

"Can't we walk a little further, anyway?" he suggested.

But she shook her head.

"I'm afraid not," she said. "You see, he doesn't take a nap before supper, but ——"

"But ——?"

"But that is only half the difficulty. He doesn't sleep, but ——"

"But ——?"

"I do."

She laughed outright then — and hugged her muff up to her bosom and laughed again.

"And what will Dagobert Henryvich do when you desert him?" asked the young man.

"Oh, you must entertain Mr. Carpenter — you can go out and walk with him next. And remember, whatever you do, don't make him mad. Let him have

his way in little things like the Baltic Fleet and the Democratic party — Tiny and I always do — but always."

"Oh, I can do that easily enough," said Dagobert; "I've knocked about so much that I'm thoroughly cosmopolitan — have neither patriotism, principles nor morals left."

"But you have feelings about the New York Custom House left — haven't you?" Mrs. Carpenter said earnestly. "You surely haven't outlived *those* — have you?"

"No," said Dagobert with emphasis, "I wouldn't be human if I ever got where I liked being welcomed home by the treatment accorded us there."

"Poor Tiny had four lovely dresses spoiled," said Mrs. Carpenter sadly. "They spread them out on the dock, and it was *so* wet. Tiny cried."

"Let's change the subject!" said Dagobert grimly.

Mrs. Carpenter sighed sadly. "Yes, let's," she said mournfully.

They walked along, sometimes in the street and sometimes on the sidewalk, according to which had the most room to walk on.

"I suppose I shall have a hard time being a Russian just at present," said Dagobert. "Lucky my overcoat is hall-marked Paris."

"You can say you were educated in France," said Mrs. Carpenter. "You can say anything you please — nobody is very clear about Russian facts, you know."

"I'll fall back heavy on my relatives," said Dagobert. "Russians always have tons of relatives. I'll lug mine in by the ears or any old way."

"Yes, do," said Mrs. Carpenter simply.

"And you will trust me, won't you?" said Dagobert. "I promise you, you shall not go from Bremen tomorrow — I promise," he added, with great fervency.

"I believe you," she replied earnestly; then she laughed. "It's so jolly meeting you," she said. "When I advertised I really thought I wanted someone for Mr. Carpenter. But it seems as if I'm taking you all to myself."

Dagobert felt a sharp thrust which was so sharp that whether it was pain or joy he could not tell.

They went quickly along the Hoherweg past Löser's, and Hartwig's, and Hornthal's, and all the other curious names, and he had so much ado to follow the ins and outs of his companion's footsteps that they said not a word until, turning to him at the Platz, she remarked, "After supper what shall you and Mr. Carpenter do?"

"Oh, dear," said Dagobert, stepping over a dog and out for a woman, "must it be Mr. Carpenter, too, after supper?"

"You can interest him, I know," she said, smiling gaily. "He isn't a bit the usual American — he's deeply interested in Europe and he'll like to hear your side of the war. He didn't approve of the peace at all — he says war is one of Nature's principles."

"I suppose there wouldn't be standing room on the globe if Mr. Roosevelt had his own way all around," said Dagobert, laughing.

Mrs. Carpenter laughed, too.

"I read an article once on how if David hadn't killed Goliath, but had let him settle down to domestic

life, we'd have two billion living giants among us today," she said.

"I'm glad he killed him," said Dagobert decidedly.

"Why?"

"Because I like to look big myself."

They turned in the door of the Wienerhof and saw the head waiter standing smiling under the clock.

The clock said twenty-five minutes past five.

"I must run," exclaimed Mrs. Carpenter — and ran at once.

Dagobert paused behind.

"Well, have you thought it all out?" he asked the head waiter.

"Yes, gracious sir, I have thought — I am still thinking. You may rely upon all being done as you wish."

"How will you manage?"

The beneficence of the head waiter's smile became enigmatic.

"The details must be arranged later," he said. "I only ask the gracious sir to trust implicitly."

"Makes me think of 'pig won't get over the stile,'" thought Dagobert. "I beg her to trust me, the head waiter begs me to trust him — I wonder who in thunder he's turning the job over to."

Then he looked at the man again and was ashamed of himself for conceiving any sentiment other than utter confidence when the beams of that smile were enveloping him in their hope-giving radiance.

"Do your best," he said. "I'll be most substantially grateful, I swear." Then he hurried to his room.

The purchases which he had made and ordered

sent home, were already arrived and lying on the table. But he paid no attention to them; he had a good hour and a half, and he threw himself forthwith into a chair and plunged into a bottomless pit of reverie.

Well, here was an adventure — were they blue or gray? Blue? — no, gray. How little idea one ever has what a day may bring forth! . . . Stupid, not to have bought a toilet-bag . . . such long eyelashes, too! . . . How old was she, anyhow? Nineteen — not more. . . . How long could she have been married? A year? not more. . . . Curious; was it for money? . . . Quaint town, Hildesheim! Delightful place to stroll about — she walked so well, too. Odd, how short that hour had been! Getting late, now, though. What under the sun could "*stift*" mean? "Rolandstift!" Droll picture of Samson and Delilah. . . . What a dear little laugh she had! What fun it would be to do the whole town together — she and he! Good idea to go out later that evening. Europe always looked so well by electric light. Why didn't Mr. Carpenter go to sleep after supper? Very good habit for elderly gentlemen. Very . . .

He was interrupted by a tap at the door.

"*Herein!*" he cried.

It was the *Oberkellner*.

"Gracious sir," he said — and the breadth of the beam passed all belief — "I have found a plan and it will succeed. Give assent to everything, assist the departure in all ways. But rest assured that the most gracious lady will *never* sail to-morrow."

III

THE *Oberkellner's* assurance raised Dagobert to the highest pitch of happiness to which he had ever hitherto attained. He didn't care to know any of the particulars, he was only too willing to act the part of innocence aiding to speed the parting guest; but *wasn't* it glorious that she wasn't going to have to go since she hadn't wanted to go? And wasn't it more than glorious that he had been the means through which she had attained to that desired end?

He went whistling about his room as he dressed, quite filled with the joyous insouciance of a boy of twelve, and it was only after he had come to the end of the third complete tune that he began to be aware of a shadow lurking behind his happy carelessness. He had been conscious of the same shadow earlier in the day, but the *Oberkellner's* news had overlaid it to the point of forgetfulness for the last brief period. What under the sun was the sense of *his* feeling any blight upon his good spirits now, anyhow? The letter of credit was sure to be found, and in any case its loss had been a blessing in disguise, since it had led to his knowing Mrs. Carpenter. Supposing that he had never lost the letter of credit, or read the morning paper, or known Mrs. Carpenter! Good gracious, it was all too awful to contemplate!

The shadow on his spirits was undoubtedly the close chance which he had run of never knowing Mrs. Carpenter. But he knew her now and he was always going to know her from now on. St. Eloi could fool around Germany as long as the general fooled around France, if he so chose, but Dagobert was going straight back to Paris when the Carpenters went there, and he was going to go straight back to America when they went there, too. The idea of crossing the ocean on their steamer appealed to him mightily. The steamer rolls and people cling to you, you know, and you hold them up, you know, and then sometimes the moon shines and then again it doesn't shine. . . .

Dagobert was adjusting his scarf-pin and thinking buoyantly of all sorts of future joys even while he wondered that the insistent shadow never ceased to dog the heels of his dancing hopes. He tried to drive it from him by keeping his thoughts fixed on the possibilities of nights when the moon did *not* shine, but it was cruelly persistent in its clinging.

Then he went to the window and looked out on the street all crowded with the tide flowing homeward. He felt very strangely — as if there was a lesson in the shadow — a lesson waiting for him to learn. He leaned in the window and was conscious of a certain resolute tightening of all his muscles. For a little he waited tense and rigid; and then he turned from the window and walked up and down the room, his brows drawn together and his arms tightly folded across his bosom. He was fighting hard and he knew that he was fighting hard. All sorts of words and thoughts and speeches tossed up on the foam of his battling. It was inevitable that

the truth should finally come out uppermost. He put it from him, remembering his indignation with St. Eloi — his condemnation of the poor little princess of Hanover; he had been well-raised even if his education had been daringly liberal, and he would not admit even to himself that ——

Oh, no, no, *no!*

The shadow was close beside him, pressing against his forehead, compressing his heart. My God, it wasn't six hours yet! It couldn't be true! He was conjuring up a spirit to vex himself. . . .

And then he went by the wall, rested his hand against it, clenched his other hand hard, and without knowing what he was saying or doing repeated three times aloud:

"She *is* a married woman!"

After that he was quiet as if the admission had freed him of a burden, and then he turned about, feeling ages older and wiser, and said:

"I must be a good friend to her, but I must not go to Paris with them. It wouldn't be white. She's too sweet." He paused a little after that and then he added, "And I care too much for her."

The wonder of it all was so mighty that he very nearly forgot his supper-party in thinking of it, and then when he remembered he pulled himself together quickly and put into his new resolves all the fine clean strength that had carried him so often to victory upon the track. The day he was living was forever a marked day in his life, but the marked hour of the day was beyond all question the hour that he spent alone by himself in his own room, thinking.

He went down to the private dining-room a little

before seven and found the table laid for three and a bouquet of violets at Mrs. Carpenter's place, just as he had ordered.

His guests arrived five minutes after the hour and he felt to the full effect all that had taken place in his room when he saw the sweet, girlish face again and looked into those deep blue-gray eyes.

"Sorry to be late, prince," said her husband easily, "but I fell asleep over the state of affairs in your country. When you don't blow up some magnate it makes the daily news seem so awfully tame, don't you know?"

Dagobert gladly seized this clue out of the somewhat labyrinthian situation; there is nothing so amusing as lying your way out of difficulties when you know yourself to be in other and deeper difficulties out of which there seems to lie no way.

"They blew up two of my cousins last week," he said, "and shot one, and drowned four," he added, pulling out Mrs. Carpenter's chair as he spoke.

"Oh, I say!" said Mr. Carpenter, sticking his glass in his eye, "you aren't serious?"

"Oh, but I am — but what does it matter? Subtract seven princes of New Polsk and it leaves thirty-nine alive. That's a principle of our race which the outside world doesn't seem able to grasp with the right hand."

"No," said Mr. Carpenter a little blankly, "I'm sure it never struck me so before."

Mrs. Carpenter sat down in her chair and Dagobert slid her into place. Mr. Carpenter sat down. Dagobert sat down. The waiter began to serve them and everything was hot and well-cooked. For was it not the Wienerhof?

"Now this is really great," said Mr. Carpenter heartily. "So nice to meet someone speaking English, you know. And you do really speak it uncommonly well, you know," he added; "your English master must have caught you young."

"He did," said Dagobert, "very young; fact is, I was born in England. My father was minister-extraordinary there, fixing up the affairs of the Crimea."

"Surely not of the Crimea!" exclaimed Mrs. Carpenter.

"Oh, well, of the Charge of Balaklava then," said Dagobert readily, "or maybe it was the Indian Mutiny. Anyway, he was there, so I came there first."

Mr. Carpenter put his glass in his eye, but, the waiter bringing the soup just then, let his glass fall and picked up his soup-spoon instead.

"Isn't it good?" said Mrs. Carpenter. "I'm so hungry. I love to be hungry and then eat."

"That's a glad hearing for your host," said the young man; "it's always nice to dine with people who are hungry." He smiled straight at her as he spoke. He meant to be brave and he was being brave — but it was hard. She returned the smile in full — oh, that made it so much harder!

"And that dear little waiter," she said; "isn't he cunning? He brought up my breakfast this morning and I thought he was part of a dream."

"I didn't," said Mr. Carpenter; "waiters and dreams never blend with me. But when are you going back to Russia?" he asked Dagobert. "I should think your unhappy land needed all its able-bodied men these days."

"Oh, dear, no," said Dagobert; "the more sense a Russian has the further he goes just now. You ought to see that it's the only sensible course to pursue in the circumstances. The more a man wants to help, the further away he must get before beginning."

"I suppose that's really a fact," said Mr. Carpenter, "but — patriotism, don't you know, and all that?"

"Oh, patriotism doesn't go down with me even a little bit," said Dagobert. "When my countrymen dynamited my grandfather I ceased to feel patriotic."

"Dynamited your grandfather!" cried Mr. Carpenter.

"He was killed with the martyr-emperor," said Dagobert calmly. He helped himself to pepper as he spoke.

"I thought only the coachman was killed!"

"He was the coachman."

"The coachman!"

"It's a hereditary dignity in our family; when the Czar feels uneasy he always calls on a prince of New Polsk to drive him."

"Great heavens!" said Mr. Carpenter.

"That's the only thing that will ever take me back to Russia," said Dagobert. "If I'm called on to drive my Czar out, I must and shall obey. But why don't we get something else to eat?" he said. "Soup is always regarded as a starter only."

Just then the waiter came in with a dish called on the ménu the German equivalent of "fricasseed calf." It was developed under the form of stewed veal. It

wasn't what had been ordered, but it proved to be a sort of extra entrée served in addition to the selected ménu.

"I like these German dishes," said Mr. Carpenter, plunging into it at once. "I detest veal in America."

"All men do," said Mrs. Carpenter, "but I wish I had some chow-chow to eat with this."

"There," said Mr. Carpenter, laying down knife and fork and staring abruptly around, "there — that's the thorough-paced American spirit for you. Wants steam heat in the fjords of Norway, ice-water in Gerolstein and chow-chow here. I tell you, the moderns who deserve halos are Cook & Sons, who tour shoals of the discontented about year after year."

"I don't often want things," protested Mrs. Carpenter; "just compare me with Tiny!"

"Tiny and you are two different propositions," said Mr. Carpenter. "I am obliged to humor Tiny."

Mrs. Carpenter opened her mouth a bit and then shut it; Dagobert felt such a sympathy for the opening and such an admiration for the shutting that he wanted to grab a sword, fly anywhere, and fight anyone for — chow-chow.

"But really —" he commenced.

"Prince," said Mr. Carpenter, beginning to eat again, "excuse my showing feeling, but I came over a year ago with one lady, a maid, six trunks and seven small pieces of luggage. Since then I have accumulated a companion, a sister-in-law, a courier, a second maid, that dog I lost today, eleven more trunks, fifteen more pieces of small luggage, a physician, a trained nurse, a nurse and a baby — do you wonder I take fire at allusions to chow-chow?"

Dagobert's fork went down on the floor.

"And a baby!" he cried blankly.

"And a baby," said Mr. Carpenter firmly.

Dagobert looked helplessly at Mrs. Carpenter.

"Such a little dear!" she said sweetly.

Poor Dagobert! He had braced himself to bear much, but he certainly had never suspected a baby.

The waiter came in just then, carried off the remains of the fricasseed calf, and consulted as to fish.

"There is a fish," said Mr. Carpenter, addressing him in distinctly English German, "that has unexpected bones running all along its lower edge."

"You don't want that kind," said Mrs. Carpenter.

"Yes, I do," said Mr. Carpenter; "it's my favorite fish."

Dagobert felt that in his position as host he had no choice but to forthwith recover from the suddenness of the baby.

"Bring all the kinds of fish you have," he said to the waiter.

"Don't be reckless," said Mrs. Carpenter. "Your country isn't going to pay dividends for a long while, you know."

"I know," said Dagobert, "but my father is the head of the tax-collecting department for Red Russia."

"For Red Russia?"

"Yes; don't you know that Russia is divided by colors? There's Blue Russia, Pink Russia, Lemon Russia, Crushed Strawberry Russia — of course I am translating."

"What a primitive plan!" said Mr. Carpenter.

"We're very primitive," said Dagobert. "Stand-

ing where we do on the map we only have our choice of being primitive — or Chinese."

"I expect that's true," said Mr. Carpenter. "You seem to take a very broad standpoint in regard to your country, prince."

"Oh, as to that we all prefer abroad just now," said Dagobert, and then felt ashamed of himself and begged Mrs. Carpenter's pardon. However, Mrs. Carpenter only laughed and Mr. Carpenter complimented the young man again on his ready use of English and then took the compliment back, saying that he had forgotten where he was born for the moment.

The supper wound its happy course along through *Gansebraten* with three kinds of plums and other odd coincidences until they came at last to "wind-bottles" — called in English "cream-puffs" — and coffee. Mr. Carpenter fidgeted over his coffee and asked Mrs. Carpenter if she fully realized that that time tomorrow they would be far out to sea, at which Mrs. Carpenter's face fell so suddenly that she nearly caused Dagobert's coffee-cup to follow suit, he having for the nonce utterly forgotten the seriousness of the situation. Then he found her looking at him and the appeal in her eyes recalled to him the assurance of the head waiter and he smiled reassuringly in his turn.

"What train do you take in the morning?" he asked of Mr. Carpenter.

"The caravan will move at eight o'clock," replied its head. "I suppose," he added to Mrs. Carpenter, "that we can all get off then."

"I don't know," she said very dubiously.

"Well, we must, anyhow," said her better half, putting his glass to his eye and surveying her as if to size up her moving capabilities. "We have to get to Bremen and from there to Bremerhafen, you know, and the steamer sails at either two or five — I've forgotten which it is on that line."

"Don't you think," said Mrs. Carpenter to Dagobert, "that it's very unfair to call it a line from New York to Bremen, when it really runs between Hoboken and Bremerhafen — two such unattractive places?"

"I do indeed," said Dagobert heartily.

"Well," said Mr. Carpenter, "wherever the line runs to or from, it runs, and we are going on it to-morrow."

"What time does the train leave Hanover?" Dagobert asked.

"I don't know," Mr. Carpenter said. "I'm going to take a cab and go to the station after supper and find out about everything. I always have the courier do it the last thing the night before leaving, and as he isn't along to do it tonight I shall do it myself; I don't allow any changes in time-tables ever to be sprung on me."

"Can't you telephone?"

"Yes, I can, but I'm not going to; I'm going to the steamship office."

"Is there a steamship office in Hildesheim?" Mrs. Carpenter asked of Dagobert.

"It doesn't make any difference whether there is or isn't," said her husband; "I can find out everything at the station, anyhow."

"I don't think that there is a steamship office,"

said Dagobert in answer to Mrs. Carpenter, "but we can ask the head waiter."

"*Kellner*," said Mr. Carpenter to a man with two bushes of mustache sprouting fiercely in opposite directions upon his upper lip, who had just come in, "go ask the *Herr Oberkellner* to come here."

"Yes, gracious sir," replied the bushy one, and disappeared.

The *Oberkellner* came at once, bland and as ever smiling. His eyes rested on Dagobert and Mrs. Carpenter with a peculiar beam while he listened attentively to what was asked him.

Alas, no; there was no steamship office in Hildesheim, one communicated with that of Hanover when desiring to obtain steaming information.

Mr. Carpenter surveyed his table companions in a meditative silence.

"I told you so," he said after the head waiter had withdrawn. "Well, I must go down to the station, then. You two can go out to walk if you like — only don't be more than an hour. I'll be back in an hour."

Dagobert felt his heart give a big bound; what magnanimity on the part of a husband!

"Would you like to go to walk?" he asked her, striving to keep his voice even.

"Immensely," she answered.

Mr. Carpenter had risen from the table and was lighting a cigar.

"You tell them to pack up everything this evening," he said to his wife. "Make them all understand that we start at eight tomorrow morning. Don't let there be any mistake. I telegraphed Tiny this afternoon, so that's all off my mind."

"Do you think she'll come?" Mrs. Carpenter asked meekly.

"Well, if she don't, she knows where to get more money when she needs it," said Mr. Carpenter. "I am mainly interested in getting the baby and myself home."

Dagobert had forgotten about the baby in the pressure of the other conversation, and this reminder of its existence gave him a second painful throb.

"Excuse all these domestic details, prince," said Mr. Carpenter; "I must really say good-bye now. Good-bye, Dolly."

Mrs. Carpenter smiled at him and nodded. Then he departed.

"It's awfully silly of him to go away down there," she said, "but he will do it, so it isn't anybody else's blame. And it's rather nice to have him gone — don't you think?"

Dagobert smiled. Mr. Carpenter in going out had left a crack in the door. The *Oberkellner* came now and tenderly closed the crack.

"What do you suppose he did that for?" asked the young lady. "Perhaps he thinks I'm a nihilist, too."

"No," said Dagobert; "he just wants me to have a chance to tell you that everything is arranged so that you will not have to sail tomorrow."

Her face became positively illumined with joy.

"Really?" she asked.

"Yes, really."

"Who did it — you?"

"No, the head waiter."

"Do you think he can manage it?"

"I think so."

"You can't always rely altogether on a head waiter, can you?"

"You can in Germany," said Dagobert. "A German head waiter is equal to anything."

"How do you think he means to manage?" she asked. She had leaned her elbows on the table, and was supporting her chin upon her intertwisted fingers in the favorite American after-coffee pose.

"I don't know," said Dagobert carelessly. "He said leave all to him, and I'm sure I'm only too happy to do so, for it leaves me wholly at leisure to leave everything for you."

He altogether forgot his good resolutions in the fervency of his speech, but Mrs. Carpenter didn't appear to notice; she was knitting her brows.

"He must know a way to keep me from going," she said thoughtfully, "because of course if we all are once upon that train we'll sail — nothing on earth could stop a German train, you know."

Dagobert was obliged to acquiesce there; he did so with a mere motion of his head, saying no word.

"If we are prevented from going," Mrs. Carpenter continued thoughtfully, "Mr. Carpenter will certainly be very, very angry, and I don't want to have to bear it alone. I want Tiny here. I can't do anything with him, but you know how men are once they're married — Tiny can manage him always."

Dagobert felt a warm blaze about his heart, but still said nothing.

"I think," Mrs. Carpenter went on still more slowly, "that I'll telegraph Tiny tonight at Dresden. They'll know at the hotel there whether she's

coming or going. If she's on her way to Bremen they'll know where to forward, and if she hasn't left Vienna they'll know that, too. Antonio keeps them posted always."

"Do you think that your sister might be hurrying through to Bremen tonight?" Dagobert asked.

"I haven't an idea," said Mrs. Carpenter frankly. "I know there's a train by Leipzig that stops here; I know that because we came on it once. I can telegraph her to try to be here tomorrow. Then I sha'n't have so very long alone with him after he finds that he's lost the boat."

"Perhaps that might be a good idea," said Dagobert. "Write out the telegram and I'll ring for a waiter and send it at once." He handed her the ménu, blank side up and his own fountain-pen as he spoke, and she began to write while he went to ring.

The *Oberkellner* came himself, coughing discreetly outside the door before he opened it. When Dagobert gave him the telegram he smiled even more than usual.

"You think you can manage that we do not go?" Mrs. Carpenter asked of his blandness.

"Most gracious lady, I am perfecting the last details at present. Gracious lady need not worry. All will be as she wishes."

Mrs. Carpenter surveyed him earnestly.

"But we must pack, mustn't we?"

"Oh, I especially request that gracious lady does in all things precisely as if she meant to travel at eight in the morning."

"Then I must go up and tell them all to keep on packing," she said to Dagobert, rising.

He rose, too.

"And then we're going to walk, you know," he reminded her. "It's such a fine night and no end of delightful walks close by."

"That will be charming," she said, smiling brightly. "Wasn't it lovely of him to say that I could? I can't think what possessed him — he's usually so strict — but *so* strict."

And then she was gone.

"Don't you make any mistakes in your programme," Dagobert said to the head waiter when they were left alone together. "Remember that I am relying altogether upon you."

"Gracious sir may trust," said the head waiter serenely.

It was about a half-hour before Mrs. Carpenter came down. She had changed her dress and looked very fit for walking in her traveling costume and little close turban with its two quills at the side.

"It's too jolly, his taking it into his head to go to the station like that tonight, isn't it?" she said, looking frankly into Dagobert's eyes as if confident of acquiescence. "Isn't it?"

"Altogether so," said he heartily.

Then they went out of the door and up the Wollenweberstrasse on their way to the Wall.

"He's an awful undertaking," Mrs. Carpenter confided as she went along a sidewalk two feet wide and Dagobert kept pace with her in the gutter. "I tell you, I never was so sick of anything in my life as I am of him." She spoke with great feeling.

"Is it long?" Dagobert ventured to inquire.

"Nearly three years. Oh, heavens!" she an-

swered, and then she gave herself a little shake and said, "I'm always so surprised over how pretty the baby is. Don't you think it's surprising that *he* should have a pretty baby?"

Dagobert found it impossible to discuss the baby. He wanted to say gallantly how little astonished anyone could be at the baby's beauty, but he somehow felt a bitter resentment over the baby's existing at all. But his better nature finally struggled to the surface and forced him to say that he really considered Mr. Carpenter to be a very good-looking man.

Mrs. Carpenter sighed.

"Well, maybe so," she said, "but I'm awfully tired looking at him, I know. Tiny thinks he's good-looking just the same as you do, but my own opinion is that the baby took mighty big chances. It might have looked just exactly like him ever so easily and then whatever could we have done with its nose? But luckily it inherited my own father's nose."

"There," said Dagobert suddenly, "that's the Kehrwiederthurm!"

"Is it, indeed?" said Mrs. Carpenter. "Well, you know if it had had his nose it *never* could have been pretty, could it?"

"I must tell you the legend," then said Dagobert. "Once upon a time ——"

"I'll read it in the Baedeker some day when I'm alone," said Mrs. Carpenter. "I'd rather talk to you now; you're the first man I've had to talk to in a month."

"Really?"

"Yes, really. Mr. Carpenter doesn't like to have

young men around. They make him nervous on account of Tiny. Tiny's like me — she likes men."

Dagobert perceived the moon shining ahead — it was located in a position to be considered a good omen, but he could not see how any omen could be good under the circumstances. They went up the path to the promenade that runs along the top of the old fortification and followed its summit in the direction of the Sedanstrasse. Dagobert walked with his head set at an angle which commanded a full view of her face, upturned toward the moonbeams. She was positively one of the prettiest sights that he had ever looked upon. He was conscious of a fearful heartache that was growing steadily worse and worse.

"I'm so glad that we have money enough so that I never have to pack," Mrs. Carpenter said presently. "I'd so much rather be out walking with you to-night."

"It is nice," he assented. "I should hate to have had you spend this evening packing."

"Yes, it would have been an awful shame," she said simply.

They strolled on until they reached the end and then turned back and walked the other way, going on and on, past the Kleine Venedig, the Magdalena-kirche and all the rest. Finally the Andreaskirche bells, tolling nine, made them turn toward home. Dagobert felt that that day was almost over.

Such a wonderful day! Such a bewildering day! A day upon which more had happened than he had ever before dreamed possible; a day that would probably cost him no end of pain in its consequences,

and yet a day from whose consequences he had not the slightest intention of drawing back.

"I am glad that we happened to meet," she said, as they zigzagged through the narrow streets on their way back to the hotel.

"I am, too," he declared heartily.

"When are you coming back to America?" she asked a minute after.

"Dear me, I don't know," he said. "I'm traveling with another fellow, you see."

It came to him with a curious stab how ready he had been to abandon St. Eloi earlier in the day — before he had fully comprehended what had happened.

"Is he nice?" she asked earnestly.

"Nice enough," he answered, laughing a little. "He's French — we were boys together at Ouchy ten years ago."

"Is he as nice as you?" she asked, lifting up her beautiful eyes to him in the moon-rays.

Dagobert laughed with a curious choke in his throat.

"Oh, of course not," he declared.

Then she laughed, too.

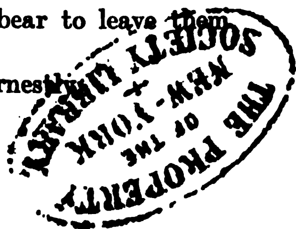
"I hope I'll meet him some day," she said.

"I hope that you will," he answered, "and I hope that I'll be there when you do."

"Why?"

"Because I want to meet you again myself." His voice sank as he spoke the words; he did not want to say them, and yet he could not bear to leave them unsaid.

"Do you?" she spoke very earnestly.



"Yes, I do."

She made no answer and he kept silence, too, until they reached the hotel. When they entered, the *Oberkellner* met them, beaming.

"All is arranged," he said. "All is so well arranged I have only to pray — to entreat your graciousnesses to trust completely."

"I'm quite ready to trust you," said Mrs. Carpenter; "only I want to be sure that I don't go."

"Gracious lady will not go, never fear," said the smiling *Oberkellner*.

The gracious lady thereupon went up to see how matters stood above, and Dagobert made up his mind to wait in the lower hall and see if either she or Mr. Carpenter might require any further friendly services of him before retiring.

Mr. Carpenter not getting back from the station as speedily as he had anticipated the pseudo-prince was rewarded for his courtesy by seeing Mrs. Carpenter return below, her face illumined with joy.

"Oh, I am positively too happy to live!" she cried on seeing him. "This came from Tiny while we were out, and she is on the train tonight coming nearer every minute and planning to meet us tomorrow morning in Hanover! Isn't she a dear?"

"Yes, indeed," said Dagobert, joyous in her joy, although growing more depressed hourly on his own account.

"And most of the packing is done, too," she continued, "and Dr. Gibben is too pleased for words that we sail tomorrow. You see, as soon as they get back he's going to marry the baby's trained nurse."

"Is that so?" said Dagobert.

"Yes; it's been a very convenient arrangement because the baby makes such a bond between them that they never neglect him. But it seems rather mean to think how they are all to be fooled tomorrow, don't you think?"

"Oh, I don't know. They'll be married plenty long enough, anyway, probably." He spoke a little bitterly.

"I wish you wouldn't say things like that," said Mrs. Carpenter seriously; "I don't like cynical men, and I don't like jokes about marriage. Marriage isn't any joke and it ought not to be joked about."

"I'll try to remember," said poor Dagobert.

"But I do wonder how the *Oberkellner* has arranged things," she continued. "I want to go to bed, and I keep feeling as if maybe something was about to happen."

"We shall soon know now," said Dagobert. "It is nearly ten, and whatever is to happen must happen by eight tomorrow morning."

"Do you suppose he means to change the clocks and get us to the station too late? I hope he isn't attempting that, for Mr. Carpenter travels with his own alarm-clock."

"All we can do is to trust him."

"Yes, but I do wish that I knew."

There was a little pause, during which she rubbed her eyes sleepily.

"I do wonder," she then suggested anxiously, "where Mr. Carpenter can be. You don't suppose that they could have kidnapped him, do you?"

"Good heavens," exclaimed Dagobert, with a start, "I never thought of that!"

"Oh, no, that couldn't be," said Mrs. Carpenter.

"Why not?" All Dagobert's thoughts were clashing together pellmell, Mr. Carpenter's jealousy and the fact that his wife was his wife being uppermost in the confusion.

"Because I hear him getting out of a cab," said she calmly.

True enough, Mr. Carpenter *was* just getting out of a cab at the door. Hurrying in, he explained to them that he had been communicating with Tiny in Leipzig over the long-distance telephone.

"It took the most unconscionable time," he explained.

"I thought that she was on the train now," said Mrs. Carpenter.

"No, they have to wait in Leipzig until eleven."

"Let's go to bed," said Mrs. Carpenter. "I'm sure I'm sleepy, and you are, too, and probably the prince is also."

"I certainly am," said Dagobert, suddenly conscious of how late he had been up the night before and how strenuous a day was drawing to a close.

"Bless me, I declare I forgot that you were a prince," said Mr. Carpenter; "you do look for all the world so like an American! Well, ring for some hot water for me."

Dagobert rang. Mrs. Carpenter began to mount the stairs slowly.

"You'd better come down early and see us off, prince," Mr. Carpenter said agreeably, as he followed suit.

"Yes, I certainly will," said Dagobert.

Then the waiter came and he told him about the hot water, and departed above, himself.

IV

IN spite of his fatigue Dagobert found himself unable to sleep that night. His body luxuriated in a spread-out-full-length attitude, but his mind seemed more wakefully inclined than he had ever known before. It chased wildly around among the events of the day just past and showed him himself in so many new and inconsistent characters that he was altogether bewildered. He felt that his situation in regard to the advertisement and its consequences was absurd; that his trust in the wit of the waiter was wholly without foundation; that he belonged anywhere in the world rather than in Hildesheim; and that the shade of Königsmark and the sarcasm of St. Eloi would have a right now to track him till he died. Of course then he thought about Mrs. Carpenter and her sweet face and girlish ways, and didn't blame himself, and cursed himself, turn and turn about. His good sense feared that in the catastrophe to ensue upon the morrow he would lose forever the friendship of her husband, in which case his chances of meeting her again would probably diminish very materially. He writhed at that even while he told himself that it was very likely all for the best.

A man rarely ever sets out deliberately to fall in love, but having once fallen in love, he *never* wants to be barred away from its object, if she is married

even less so than if she isn't. Dagobert was an uncommonly decent fellow, but he was no exception to any of the usual rules of mankind. He knew now that he was desperately in love with Mrs. Carpenter, he had no intention of pursuing her or attempting to ruin her peace of mind; but he did want, hope, and intend to see more of her. And he did not relish the idea of possibly seeing his castle crumble in the air.

Altogether his night was one of restlessness and torments, and only toward dawn did he fall into an uneasy sleep. It seemed that it was hardly on him when it was off again by reason of some fearful crash over his head.

He started up in bed. It sounded as if the very Wienerhof were falling about his ears at first and then he recollected at once that it must be the conveying below of the extensive Carpenter luggage. Reference to his watch told him that it was a quarter of eight. He sprang to the bell and rang it violently.

The head waiter himself answered. This was surprising, as the head waiter does not usually respond to the first ringing of strangers. Hot water is more often what they desire in the morning — and hot water is what they usually get.

Still, in Dagobert's case the head waiter was most welcome.

"Isn't that the trunks being taken down?" he asked.

The head waiter nodded a smiling assent. His blandness had increased perceptibly during the night.

"Gracious sir must trust blindly," he said. "All is perfectly arranged. The gracious lady has already departed, her maid also."

"Madame has *departed!*" Dagobert cried, astonished.

"Yes, gracious sir, but I must beg for the utmost confidence. I only ask unlimited trust. Success is certain. Hermann has all in charge. I shall myself have the honor to accompany the party to the station. Every detail is ordered exactly. There can be no slip."

Dagobert looked at the man: the breadth of his smile was only to be equaled by the depth of his assurance.

"Can you swear to all that?" the American asked.

"Gracious sir may depend upon me," said the German, "and I am also willing to swear," he added; "to fail is human, but in this case failure is impossible."

Dagobert dismissed him with a gesture and began at once to dress. The disorder outside continued, and after a while Mr. Carpenter's voice was heard dominating the tumult. Shortly after the younger man completed his toilet and emerged into the hall. The luggage was still descending in apparently unlimited quantities, and Mr. Carpenter in a cosmopolitan get-up, helped out by certain expediting native epithets, was supervising things in general, without appearing to hasten matters to any great extent.

Dagobert could not but admire the readiness with which the head waiter was helping the departure on. He was continually taking things from Hermann and putting them somewhere else, calling to the second porter to put down what he was carrying and lend a hand elsewhere, stopping trunks on their way below to the end that he might be personally positive of their

being correctly strapped, and in short doing all that he possibly could to prove his sincere interest in the task at hand.

Dagobert felt such a longing to see the game through that he suggested going to the station.

"Yes, do," said Mr. Carpenter. "Why don't you come on over to Hanover with us? It'll just make a nice break in your day."

Dagobert wondered whether he wouldn't. The idea made it necessary to draw the head waiter to one side and demand fresh assurance.

"Yes, the gracious sir will do well to go to Hanover. . . . Oh, as to the bill — never mind. That will all adjust itself later."

Dagobert looked hard at the man.

"Gracious sir," he said with an impressiveness known only to head waiters, "leave all to me. I may repeat to you a thousand times that all will move on to complete triumph if I am to be trusted."

Hermann and another man passing down with another trunk ended the conversation. It was the last.

"Now, then, where's the baby?" Mr. Carpenter called from the hall below. The maids scurried up to produce the baby, and the opening of the door above told that it was most lustily alive. Dagobert flew for his hat and coat, and as he emerged he saw the Carpenter heir being taken below by his nurse, his trained nurse and his body physician. Seeing the baby gave him the same awful wrench that he had felt the evening before, but he could not wait to sound its secret springs and merely hastened downstairs in his turn.

Mr. Carpenter stood in the hall below settling his difference with the landlord.

"Did you get any breakfast, prince?" he asked Dagobert.

"I never eat it — we don't."

"Oh, I forgot; well, come on, then."

The Wienerhof omnibus and two carriages were at the door. All the school children who passed that way were banked up about staring at the tremendousness of the entire affair.

The head waiter, in hat and coat, came out and got into the omnibus and drove away first. The baby and his escort took the next carriage; Mr. Carpenter and Dagobert had the last.

"Why did Mrs. Carpenter go so early?" Dagobert was fain to inquire.

"I don't know," said Mr. Carpenter. "I never know why she does anything."

They were just turning into the Zingel, and at the turning the carriage stopped.

"What's the matter?" Mr. Carpenter asked.

"Nothing to speak of, gracious sir." The man on the box was getting down as he spoke, and Mr. Carpenter at once opened the door and got down, too.

"Good I always allow liberal time," he said as he joined in the trouble fore. "Why, I don't see anything wrong here."

There was something wrong, at any rate. The driver was much distressed; he ran from side to side and back again and undid buckles and did them up. In the end he fussed so much that Mr. Carpenter began to chafe and then to swear. Dagobert felt that the first meshes of the plot were beginning to weave, so at last he jumped out, too, and ran back and forth and swore some also.

"I tell you, it's all damned foolishness," Mr. Carpenter exclaimed finally. "That harness is all right; you get up and drive on. Do you hear?"

The driver climbed back on his seat and drove on, and after that they went at a fairly brisk pace. Around at the station the head waiter was standing smiling before the great door, awaiting them. The remainder of the party were above on the platform, he said, but the luggage was waiting, since it was not known on what tickets it was to be checked. Mr. Carpenter produced the tickets, and the head waiter undertook the checking. He was gone so long that Mr. Carpenter's liberal time allowance began to be very sensibly short, and he finally lost patience and hurried over himself. But the man was just handing the paper checks, and the head waiter passed them to Mr. Carpenter at once, although he was to honor them by his company above.

From this point on affairs thickened rapidly. They went through the gates and to the fourth staircase, then discovered that they had been misinformed and had to come back to the first. The train was already in and Hermann, who was to have stood guard by the car containing their reserved compartments, was not to be seen anywhere.

Dagobert was very anxious to see Mrs. Carpenter, awfully nervous for fear nothing would happen, awfully nervous for fear something had happened, awfully nervous in the knowledge that the moment was so close when something must happen. Mr. Carpenter's excitement and perturbation were beginning to pass all bounds. The train was tremendously long and part of it was corridor and part of it wasn't.

Two coupés were reserved in his name and Hermann had been instructed to stand at the door until the last member of the family was entered therein. Hermann had evidently misunderstood, or disobeyed, or both. In the end there was nothing to do — the guard was closing the doors — but for the two gentlemen to "get in anywhere." Travelers know what it means when one has paid for a first-class ticket and a reserved carriage to be obliged to "get in anywhere." Mr. Carpenter scowled, swore, and laid his hand upon the guard-rail. Dagobert was close behind him; the train bell was ringing. And just then the head waiter, who had been rushing madly about in a way that showed how readily dignity may be overcome by anxiety to find Hermann, laid eyes upon him, four cars further back. Hermann was waving vigorously.

"The gracious lady must be there!" exclaimed the *Oberkellner*, signaling Hermann with a fervor that equaled his own.

"What is it?" Mr. Carpenter asked.

"I think Mrs. Carpenter is further back," Dagobert answered. "Hermann seems to be there."

"Well, it's too late to change now," said the husband in deep disgust; "the bell is ringing."

"Shall I run back and make sure?" his friend suggested, seeing an indication of Fate's having possibly arranged for him to travel to Hanover with Mrs. Carpenter.

"I don't believe you'll have time to get there and get aboard. Better wait and we can get together when we change at Lehrte."

Just then the head waiter hurried up to them.

"Gracious sir," he said to Dagobert, "I pray you at once — without a second's delay —" He seized him by the arm where he was standing just by the train-step.

"Good heavens, *what's* the matter now?" Mr. Carpenter exclaimed.

"I appeal — I implore —" said the head waiter with impressive earnestness.

Dagobert felt that he had no choice but to yield to the man's importunity.

"The train will not go without you," said the head waiter assuringly; "it will wait. Come, come quick!" He hurried him as he spoke across the wide platform and into the little room where all ticket differences are adjusted satisfactorily. Once inside he closed the door. Dagobert looked out of the window.

The train was moving slowly out of the station!

He made one fierce spring, and the head waiter grabbed his arm.

"Gracious sir," he said — he was again all smiles — "all is over. Madame is not on the train."

"Not on the train!" cried the young man.

"No."

"Where is she?"

"At the Wienerhof."

Dagobert reeled against the telegraph desk.

"At the Wienerhof!" he cried in indescribable accents.

"Yes, gracious sir — I promised you that she should not go, and she has not gone. Moreover, it is very easy to represent to her husband that it was all a blunder which I only discovered at this latest moment. He saw me rush with you to the telegraph office. Too late!"

Dagobert took out a handkerchief and wiped his forehead. His brains were so far in abeyance that he could not decide whether to hug the head waiter for his daring ingenuity or whether to knock him down. But in a few seconds the enormity of the whole thing flashed over him and he very nearly reeled again. What Mr. Carpenter would think, what Mr. Carpenter would do, the utter folly of supposing for a second that Mr. Carpenter would believe —! Oh, how far, how much too far, how much too much too far the clever *Oberkellner* had gone!

"What is Mrs. Carpenter supposed to have done with herself?" he asked after a moment.

"Gracious sir, it is intended to represent that she boarded by mistake the train that passed before this."

"Is there any other train that could get her to the boat in time to sail now?" Dagobert's tone was slow and distinct.

"That will take her to the boat!" said the man in a tone that showed that he doubted his sense of hearing.

"God, man," said Dagobert, "do you realize what you've done!"

The head waiter stared, bewildered.

"Gracious sir is *not* pleased?" he faltered at last.

"Pleased! Pleased that you have done this? No, I'm not pleased, certainly."

The *Oberkellner's* face began to turn pale.

"What did the gracious sir desire me to do?" he asked.

"I desired the family prevented from sailing."

"The family!" The *Oberkellner's* tones approximated a shriek. "The family! But gracious sir said

only the gracious lady; he declared repeatedly that only the gracious lady must be prevented by some accident from sailing!"

Dagobert felt something like a heat flash go over him. The man was certainly right — he saw the whole thing clearly now. What a mess! What an awful, awful, *awful* mess!

"Come," he said, "come, let us hurry to the hotel. Perhaps —" He didn't finish the sentence. He dashed away toward the staircase and the waiter came running after him. The latter's face had lost all its joyous beaming; he felt that in the supreme moment his success had been crowned with failure.

Outside of the station Dagobert leaped into a cab.

"Get in with me," he said to his accomplice. "The Wienerhof — quick!" he called to the cabman. The taximètre rattled away and then the American turned to the German and demanded fiercely:

"How did you keep her behind? Did you lock her up?"

"No, gracious sir; I only begged her to remain in her room until sent for. Gracious sir is prayed to remember that it was represented to me as of the greatest importance that the gracious lady did not leave for Bremen today."

It seemed as if the exposition of the whole truth would cast Dagobert out of the cab and on to the stones in an access of mad despair.

"My God!" he groaned in English, "I have taken a married woman away from her husband without meaning to be anything but obliging." Then he wondered if he ought not to have telegraphed the train at Lehrte. "What *will* she say? What will

she do?" he reflected, in acute misery. "Can I telegraph direct to Lehrte from the hotel?" he asked the head waiter. The head waiter was looking fearfully blue. He bowed his head sadly.

They turned the corner of the Zingel and passed into the Friesenstrasse — the Wienerhof was close at hand. Dagobert felt his heart beset with so many and such terrible emotions that he really hardly knew what he did feel.

The cab stopped.

"You pay him," he said to the waiter. "What room is it? The same as yesterday?"

The head waiter nodded yes and he flew in and up the stairs. The room was up two flights and he climbed them two steps at a time. It was the large room in the middle. He rapped.

"Félice," said Mrs. Carpenter's voice inside, "see what that is."

Félice opened the door.

Dagobert saw into the room and nearly fell over backward.

The room was in nice order and strewn over with the evidence of traveling luxury in an unpacked state. The maid was trim and neat in her usual uniform. Mrs. Carpenter sat at a small table breakfasting; she had on a peignoir tied with rose ribbons.

"Dear me, is it you?" she said, in great surprise. "Mr. Carpenter told me last night that he meant to ask you to go to Hanover with him. I didn't expect you back until afternoon. Tell me, how *did* you do it?"

Dagobert dragged a chair to the opposite side of the small table and sat feebly down.

"Are we both gone mad?" he asked.

Mrs. Carpenter looked at him, and the smile and fun died out of her face.

"Oh, I forgot that you didn't know," she said; and then she leaned forward and took his hand between both her own.

"Forgive me," she said. "You see, I'm so thoughtless, I always forget that you don't know. But really, I had a right to stay behind if I wanted to; I'm not his wife."

"Not his wife!"

"No," she shook her head; "it was so much easier than to keep explaining because Tiny and I are twins and look so much alike. It was simpler all around. I didn't mind traveling with him a bit, for I really like Mr. Carpenter, and Tiny so wanted a rest, but I couldn't be forever explaining, so I just let it go. I meant to tell you, but it always slipped my mind."

"Not his wife!"

"Oh, no," she shook her head again, "I'm not anyone's wife. I'm not married. I'm only Tiny's sister. I hope you don't mind very much?" She looked at him as she spoke.

"Mind!" He was unable to voice more than the one syllable.

"But I'm so curious about it all. Do tell me now — how *did* you manage to get him off?"

Dagobert rested his head in his hands; he could not help it. All his senses were swaying dizzily back and forth; he *couldn't* understand.

"And I've just had a telegram from Tiny," continued the whilom Mrs. Carpenter; "she'll meet them at Hanover. That will make everything all right. I

telegraphed to Lehrte that I'd heard from her and she would meet them at Hanover. I telegraphed, too, for them to send me the companion and Antonio so that I would be all right. I'm going on to Paris, you know, and of course I want to be all right. I sent the telegram, too, as soon as I saw you all drive away from the door. Isn't the head waiter a dear? He came up and told me just to rely wholly on him and I would not have to go. Tell me, how *did* you manage?"

Dagobert looked at her.

"I am completely bewildered," he said at last. "Am I awake or am I dreaming?"

"I do believe you haven't had any breakfast," she said, laughing. "Félice, run quickly and order another breakfast up here."

Félice obediently fled.

"But what are *you* going to do now?" Dagobert asked, still leaning his head on his hand and still looking at her.

"Do? Why, go on to Paris with the companion; she'll be here this afternoon, you know — just as soon as Tiny meets Mr. Carpenter."

"By George, it's like the changing scenes in a panorama," said poor Dagobert. "Do you mind telling me your real name?"

"Dolly Carpenter. It's all one family — only Mr. Carpenter was just distant enough to marry Tiny."

"Then I only need to learn to say Miss instead of Mrs. Carpenter?"

"Yes, that's all."

A waiter came in with Dagobert's breakfast, and while the latter was eating it a telegram arrived from Lehrte.

Most astonished. Sailing anyhow.

L. CARPENTER.

"Now, isn't that nice?" Miss Dolly said pleasantly. "Dear me, but it's good to be rid of him. And to think that Tiny really is ever so fond of him! I can't understand it."

Just then another telegram came in. This time for Dagobert.

Your letter of credit found in my waistcoat. How long do you mean to stay there?

ST. ELOI.

Dagobert jumped with the vividness of his recollection. So that's what he had done when he transferred his bill-book in the confusion of mutual hooks! And St. Eloi had worn the waistcoat to Herrenhausen on the following morning.

"Here's luck," he told his companion. "I've got my money back."

"Your money back!" said Miss Carpenter. "I thought you told me that you were poor."

"Only temporarily," laughed Dagobert; "only *very* temporarily. But what luck!"

"What luck — how?"

"Why, it made me answer the advertisement."

"Oh, so it did. And so we grew to know each other."

They exchanged smiles. Dagobert's breakfast had done him a world of good.

"I must go down and give that head waiter a hundred marks on account," he said suddenly. "I was

so upset when I thought he had caused me to separate you from your husband that I think perhaps he's gone into melancholia by this time."

"Oh, yes, do be nice to him, because we're really most awfully obliged to him, aren't we?"

"*I* am, I know," said Dagobert heartily.

"I'm sure that I am," said his vis-à-vis. Then she took one more little piece of bread, and said gently: "You wouldn't have come between me *and* my husband, for anything, would you?"

Dagobert felt hot.

"I — I'd have tried not to, I hope," he stammered.

"You wouldn't like a woman if she was married, would you?" she went on, smiling.

"I might like her," he confessed, "but I'd try to keep it under and be decent."

"But you wouldn't fall in love with her?"

He looked straight down at his coffee-cup.

"I might not be able to help loving her," he said steadily. "We can't always help that, you know. But we can keep from letting anyone know it."

Miss Dolly bowed her face upon her two hands and burst into laughter of the purest and most unaffected kind.

"Oh, my goodness me," she exclaimed, "do you think that you really did that? Oh, you funny man! Do go away now and settle the head waiter and afterwards I'll settle you."

Dagobert looked at her bowed head. She was still laughing heartily. He felt doubtful as to everything in the wide world, and then all of a sudden he felt quite strong and confident.

"After I'm done with the waiter," he said, "let us go out and celebrate our anniversary."

She lifted up her head.

"Anniversary of what?"

"Why, of our first meeting yesterday."

She began to laugh again at that and agreed — still laughing — to be ready to go out in an hour.

Dagobert went downstairs to the head waiter. It took barely five minutes to restore him to his usual beaming condition. Hermann came in for a share of the golden shower, as did nearly everyone else in the house.

And then he went to the telephone and conversed with St. Eloi in Hanover, asking him to go to the station and meet the Carpenter party and arrange all the business there. St. Eloi was quite willing; he promised to explain Dagobert's family and finances to Mr. Carpenter and his wife, even if he had to accompany them as far as Bremerhafen to do it thoroughly. He also undertook to see that the companion was promptly forwarded.

Miss Dolly came down just as Dagobert was finishing his telephoning. She certainly was a very pretty girl, and it was astonishing the way it brightened life to know that she wasn't married.

"As this is our anniversary, shall we take our usual walk?" Dagobert asked.

"Oh, yes," she said; so they went back by the Andreaskirche, the Eggermeggerstrasse, and the Roland hospital. It was the same sort of a gorgeous sunshiny day as that of yesterday, only to them it seemed infinitely more wonderful.

"What ages it seems since we first met!" she suggested, tipping her head so sweetly to one side that Dagobert reflected for the first time since a future

had become possible how dearly he should like to kiss her.

"It does seem a long time," he said solemnly. "Let us always come back here for our anniversaries."

She laughed.

"I don't see why you laugh," he said in a tone of remonstrance. "I fully intend to have ever so many of them, so why not here?"

She only laughed again.

After a while she sobered, though, and said:

"But didn't I do well as a wife? Wasn't I always just as nice as I could be? — and so exasperating as he was, too — but exasperating!"

"As a wife you are ideal," said Dagobert; "only I will confess I didn't like much your being Mr. Carpenter's wife."

She stopped where the street widens by the old Michaeliplatz. He stopped, too.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Why, I thought that you were going to say something more," she said. "It was such a good chance, but if you didn't think of it, never mind."

Dagobert had to laugh in his turn.

"Perhaps I did think of saying it," he said, "but twenty-four hours would be such a good reason for you to refuse, you know."

"That's true," she said soberly, "and if I didn't refuse I know Tiny would think me lacking pride. She refused Mr. Carpenter nine times — she says it is the proper way."

"Nine times is a good many," said Dagobert. "Don't you think three or four would be quite enough under ordinary circumstances?"

"*Once* has always been enough with me up to now," said Miss Dolly; "but then, of course, if you *don't* mean to marry a man you refuse him in a very different way from if you *do* mean to marry him. Tiny always cried when she refused Mr. Carpenter, and let him keep right on sending her violets. Of course he kept on proposing to her."

"Would you cry if — ?" Dagobert asked, looking intently at the Michaelikirche.

She tipped her head on one side some more and reflected.

"You are not a bit like Mr. Carpenter," she said at last.

"But do you mind the difference?"

She reflected a little more and then she said suddenly:

"I'll tell you. Madame Masjon and I will start for Paris this afternoon. Why don't you come there after a little and look us up at the Hôtel de Bade?"

"May I, really?" he asked.

She just looked at him.

"May you, really?" she repeated in great scorn. "Don't you know girls better than to ask things like that?"

He bit his mustache.

"When did you say you thought of leaving?" he asked.

"This afternoon."

"Well, I leave tomorrow. So expect me!"

Miss Dolly looked down at her glove.

"Must I, really?" she said demurely. "Oh, dear — I mean, how nice!"

AS TOLD BY RENAUD'S WIFE

"VOILA!" she leaned forward and glanced out of the window, then, nodding, "Yes, it is Varel. Ah, the poor man!"

I looked after the great painter as he crossed beneath the interweaving shadows of the lindens, his bowed head and stooped shoulders more bowed and more stooping than ever, and my look spoke my interest, even if my tongue was dumb.

She — Madame Renaud — caught the look with its question and replied straightway, half-smiling, half-sighing:

"And yet he was blithe and young once, monsieur. Ah, yes, young and blithe and good to look upon — so good to look upon. And in but one day it all changed — all changed — *et pour toujours.* Would one believe it? And yet it is so."

She paused and sighed, turned the child in her arms so that its sleep was yet further eased, and looked with sweetly saddened eyes where the figure of Varel was fast disappearing among the court shrubberies. I turned my eyes toward her, expectant, waiting, and after a minute she went on:

"It was in Paris, monsieur, years and years ago. We all lived there. Julien (Varel's first name is Julien, you know), and his sister, and Renaud (he

was not my husband then), and myself. That was how I first came to know them all — the three others. We were four young people and we were dear friends. The sister of Varel was such a pretty girl — but so frail. I may tell monsieur in utter truth that one may not be so frail and last in Paris. Paris takes strength and it had been a hard struggle. For a long, long time, too. He — Varel — had copied papers and done all manner of things so that they might live and so that he might continue to paint. She worked in a shop, braiding straw. Not good pay, but not hard work. She was not fit for hard work, oh, *la pauvre petite!* I do not know just what hardships had been survived before, but when I came into the adjoining mansard they were yet many. I was their neighbor for several months before Renaud's arrival. That was when he had the idea of being a painter also — *Dieu*, what labor he did there — until God in His infinite mercy saw fit to take his father, when this property naturally — but *la*, that is altogether another part of the story.

"Varel and his sister were very poor and yet not altogether miserable. There were days when a little pleasure might be permitted, and on such days we four went up the river into the fresh air to enjoy the green that, to my thinking, is quite as truly heaven's color as the blue above us. On such days we laughed and sang and forgot our narrow windows and our narrow means, and Varel used to be the gayest of all — very different from what he is now. He would joke merrily and make little poesies on his sister's hair, and my eyes, and Renaud would applaud and we would all enjoy every sweet minute as it passed. And

when we were quiet he used to make sketches of the trees and skies and of ourselves, and they were so true that even I — who understand nothing of pictures — was lost in a wonder of admiration for his.

"I have one in my Bible now of Lotte (his sister's name was Lotte) and Renaud, sitting together beneath the willows at Meudon. He often drew Lotte and Renaud together — it was but natural that he should. Lotte was so delicate and Renaud always guarded her weakness as a father might have done. It was he who cared for her footsteps and I only loved him the better for it. It never came to me to feel otherwise. Why should I have felt otherwise? Even then, in the first days of our knowing one another, was it not in his eyes for me — for me alone? Did he not tell me — but there! that is no part of this!

"It was the second Winter after the beginning that the end approached — the altering of Varel. It was the Prize that did it. Monsieur knows how the Prize comes into the veins as a fever, and how it drives the students mad and is bread and sleep to them for weeks often and often. If it was a fever to the rest, it was a delirium to Julien, and monsieur divines why — because he might not hope. He might only think and dream of the Winter in Italy, and the possibilities and the honor! There was no help — oh, that poor, so poor boy! . . .

"Monsieur, he hoped not and yet he planned his picture — the '*Fleur Voilée*,' monsieur has seen it? I too. Ah, we wept, Renaud and I. We were in Paris the year after and we stood before it and wept — Renaud and I. He is so sensitive and tender-hearted — *mon bon* Renaud! So sensitive and tender-hearted!

Never calf goes to market but — Ah, I wander again.

"Monsieur, it was an occasion for despair — the way that Varel felt about that picture! He craved to do it with his whole heart and soul — aye, and with his stomach, too, for, had he been alone, he would gladly have starved to pay a model to sit for him as others — many, many others — have done before him. But *Dieu! Dieu!* that winter he could pay nothing. He was not alone, and we — all we who were not rich — were like to freeze. It was wood and wood, and yet once more wood — no single sou for anything else. But, although the spirit of Julien shone in misery back of the bigness of his eyes, yet he labored in silence and we only knew of the cry within him because it was there and one heard it in the air itself.

"It was for that they were so wretched — the two Varels — that when the news of the illness of Renaud's father came, we smothered it between us, Renaud and I. I said to him, 'If you come to be able you will surely give to them, and so why dazzle their eyes when it is so possible that your father may recover, after all.' Renaud saw the wisdom of that and took my advice. He had such an opinion of my wisdom and advice — monsieur can hardly conceive. Why, only last week when it was a question of blue or red tiles he — but how I run on, forgetting all that I set out to tell!

"Still, anyone could see how Julien was riven with his desire to paint, and it was then that Lotte came to me. She was so timid and quiet — *la petite* Lotte. I always called her '*la petite*,' and felt thus toward

her, although Renaud declares I was then as small and as slight myself. She trembled and hesitated that day until my mind came to dread a thousand catastrophes, and then at last she told me her errand, and monsieur must believe that my heart choked me as I listened and understood. You see, it was her brother who was dearest of all on earth to her, and she was half wild because if he had not herself to feed and warm, he might pay the model and compete for the Prize. I can see the poor innocent now — down at my knees, her tears shaking her from head to feet — and it was all so true, so pitifully true — and I knew it was true, and she knew that I knew also.

"But still I tried to comfort her, and it was while I had my arms about her and her face was looking up from my bosom that she went on and told me what she was thinking of. She said that the idea had come to her after prayer, so she was sure that it was one of the sending of Sainte Hélène, and then she made me understand that she wished herself to sit to her brother as a model. Monsieur can guess my surprise — and it was not until she reminded me of Julien's plan for the picture that I saw how possible it was. It was a daring plan; monsieur recollects the figure lying enwrapped like a flower, with its face and hands hidden by the drooping roses. Renaud had his doubts at first when Julien used to talk of it — but *la!* time has shown forth many things since then.

"I may say with my hand on my heart that to me the idea appeared beautiful from the beginning, and it was as if it had been made to fit Lotte's desire, for anything more flower-like than her form could not be

imagined. And so I told her frankly, and when she told me that she wanted me to go myself to Varel and tell him that one, *jeune*, *belle*, *toute-inconnue*, would pose for him, if she might rest with her face veiled and never be called upon to speak, I embraced the poor child and promised her — and then we wept freely together.

"I told Renaud that night and he also was deeply moved. His father was somewhat better, and he had been much cast down — seeing plainly that our marriage must be long put off — but he put his own trouble aside and spoke so kindly — so comfortingly to me. *Mon Dieu*, but he is an angel — Renaud! The night that our fourth child had the croup — ah, I wish monsieur might have noted Renaud that night! But, thank God, it is not of the croup that I must speak now.

"And so I was to take the good news to the *pauvre garçon*, and the very next afternoon, about five, I saw, as I was returning from carrying six finished shirts, the reflection of Julien's light against the window-pane. I knew that he must be alone there because Lotte never reached home until very near seven, and so I felt that here was my most excellent chance, and after I had mounted the stairs, I went straight to his door and rapped. He cried to me 'Come in,' and when I obeyed and he saw who it was, he looked as pleased as if he had known my errand beforehand. I had never seen him so pleased before, and I may truly remark that I have never seen him so pleased since. Pleased since! Ah, God's mercy, if I have ever seen him more than smile since! He — but the story will explain!

"Well, and so he made me sit on the chair and he sat on the table and laughed and talked — poor fellow — and it was several minutes before I remembered of what I had come to speak, for he was really quite gay — that is, always gay for Varel, you comprehend. And then, when the pause came, and I might speak, will monsieur believe that I hardly knew how to word the matter? I am older now, but monsieur can understand that it really was quite a delicate affair for me, a young girl (and I was different then from what I am now — oh, very different; Renaud used to say — but we'll leave that). At any rate, I felt myself blushing and stammering most awkwardly, and it was only after Julien had helped me out with an infinity of patience that I made the whole clear to his mind.

"Monsieur, I may in absolute confession state that I have never seen anyone so deeply affected. He became very pale. He rose and walked up and down for some time. I almost began to fear he was displeased at the condition. But at last he came beside the table, and, in a voice that trembled, he said to me, 'Marguerite, I can never forget this hour. Say to the angel who hath sent thee that I will never seek to know her, nor to speak to her; that I will never approach her or touch her, but that to the last day of my life I shall pray for her night and morning, and in every church past which my steps shall lead me.'

"I was much touched myself. I wept. Later we spoke calmly and seriously, and I arranged with him that she should come on Saturdays and Sundays. I hope that I shall not appear selfish if I say that this

arrangement was a very convenient thing for Renaud and me, for it gave us a liberty together which we had never had before, and monsieur can well believe that in spite of that winter's cold we enjoyed our walks and our plans as to the future. You see, our affairs had taken a turn for the better — Renaud's father receiving a fresh shock in March — and we felt we might dare to look in windows and contemplate pots and spoons, and hope — but, oh, *ciel*, how my tongue runs!

"So Varel began his picture. Poor Lotte had bound her head up so tightly that she could hardly breathe, and the long, gauze draperies covered her straw-worn hands (for Julien would have recognized her hands as quick as her face — of such attention are artists) as closely as they sheathed her beautiful figure. And thus she posed hour after hour in the cold chill of that garret. Her brother worked as he had never worked before. He painted as if possessed by a god. She told me that he was a new being to her, he whistled so merrily, sang little love-songs, but never, never addressed her one word. You see, he thought that Lotte was away with Renaud and me, and his mind was free of all care and floated along in the paradise of his wish fulfilled. He had posed her as a flower, dew-laden and swept about by the morning mist, and she lay stretched out upon the green, a rose — a rose enwrapped in the rose of its own color. Monsieur can think what she must have been when the picture was what it was. No wonder Varel worked as one inspired!

"Of course, with only two sittings a week it took time. An artist should have his model oftener. I

remember when Renaud was going to paint his 'Goose of the Golden Egg' he expressly stipulated that he was to have the goose four mornings a week. And even with that, the picture never — but I have taken a vow never to refer to the 'Goose with the Golden Egg.' If, — if monsieur has ever occasion to visit the loft over the wagon-house he may see for himself.

"But at last the painting approached its end. Lotte had grown very pale, but not even to me would she admit that she felt ill. I said to Renaud that I sadly feared Varel was mixing his paints with blood, but he said that the Spring would bring back her color. He is always so hopeful — *le* Renaud! I have never seen such hope. Five sons before a daughter and never one breath of despair from that noble heart, and now for seven seasons has he not attempted to raise — but oh, *Dieu*, my tongue! my tongue!

"Then came the day when it went off to the competition, and the night after Lotte laid herself down upon her bed. If she was ill! — but you should have seen her. She was white as wax and weak as a babe.

"She lay there — ah, the poor one — and I nursed her every minute that I was not absolutely forth with my shirts. And Julien nursed her, too, he on one side of the bed, I on the other, hour after hour. How his eyes sought mine continually, imploring me to save her! Shall I ever forget his eyes as they were then before they changed? They cried — they burned. The sweet, poor, dear fellow! He was never stout and well-built like Renaud, but he had charms. One must admit that he had charms. I used sometimes to think — but no — no, never!

"It was not for long, as you may imagine. She faded pitifully fast. Soon she faded altogether. He wept in my arms. He clung to me. He even kissed me — it was a comfort that I could not deny him. I dressed her myself, and truly she was most beautiful. I had to support him as he looked upon her for the last time. Renaud went with him to bury her. I wept all the time while they were gone. When they came back the letter was there.

"He only glanced at the envelope, and then he fled to his own room. Renaud took me into his arms to soothe me. I was much agitated; monsieur can understand how deep an interest we felt. Never shall I forget those moments as we waited — and then, while we were waiting, the telegram regarding Renaud's father came. Such a mingling of joy and sorrow never was! I could only smile for one while I wiped my tears for the other. Life is like that, monsieur — the same rain that makes the harvest, kills the tender young turkeys. *Eh bien*, Renaud's duty called him to his father at once, of course, and I remained alone divided between sad and sweet thoughts. Losing a parent is always a heavy grief, naturally, but inheriting — ah, *c'est quelqu' chose!*

"It was then that poor Julien came in to tell me that he had taken the prize. He knelt down at my feet and laid his head against my knee and told me. 'You should know first, Marguerite,' he whispered. 'Who have I now but you? Ah, if only Lotte —' his voice broke there and I was overcome, too.

"'*La pauvre chère Lotte!*' I cried, when I could speak at last, 'could she but know! — for she gave her life for this!'

"'Her life?' he questioned, lifting up his head and fixing his eyes on mine. And it seemed only justice then to reveal the secret to him.

"Ah, monsieur, what emotion! He started to his feet and for a few minutes there was an air about him of frozen madness. I found myself wholly unable to bear it. I went to him; I put my arms about him; I said to him, 'Julien, it is terrible. Yes, it is very terrible. But such was her will; she would have it so. She was weak and ailing, life meant little to her. She was always a thing of pain — now she is free. God's will be ours.' But he only stood there, staring blind and blank at the floor.

"Then I saw that I must rouse him, and a sudden inspiration seized me. I knew that Renaud loved him and sorrowed for him even as I did myself, and I knew that anything that we could offer we would offer out of full hearts. So I took his hands in mine and pressing them hard I said, '*Tiens*, Julien, look at me. While we are young there is always something left. Listen to me.' He raised his big, sad eyes to mine and I saw a sudden gladness flashing in their depths. I clasped his hands yet more warmly then — and I said:

"'Julien, Renaud and I are to be married shortly. Leave Paris and its stones of hearts and feet and come and live with us in the sweet breath and bloom of the country. We will take you to our hearts as a brother. It shall be home to you as long as you will. Only come.'

"Oh, monsieur, that was a moment!

"On my death-bed I shall hear again the scream he gave. It was the real madness that came to him

79419B

in that instant. Lack of food and fire, work and other work, anxiety, misery, his sister's death — the Prize — it all came over him at once!

"He struck his hands to his head and rushed from me, and neither Renaud nor I saw him again for years. . . .

"It was when we decided to name the sixth boy Julien that Renaud finally wrote him a letter. He hesitated somewhat because he was become 'Varel, *tout-court*,' in the years between, but I urged the letter and it went. Varel sent the little one a silver bowl and in the Midsummer he came to see us. Of course, we were deeply honored, but we were still more shocked. It was ten years ago, and yet I may assure monsieur that he was as gray and bent and broken then as now. It was frightful to see! And other things followed. Monsieur has doubtless heard it rumored that the mind of the great man —? Terrible, is it not? — but between you and me, Renaud and I cannot doubt it. My little Marguerite was three years old that summer, and the night after he came, he woke us all, crying her name in his sleep. I was sadly alarmed, thinking it was a summons from above for the dear child; monsieur knows how such things have been. But the next night it was worse yet, and then Renaud moved him out into the maisonette, telling him that the children would not wake him up out there at night. Renaud has such delicacy — he never hinted to him that then he would not wake us up either. He liked the maisonette — *le pauvre Varel.* (I trust monsieur will pardon me; I always forget how great a man he is and feel for him a pity *tout simple.*) And he drew things all over

the walls and ever since then we have kept it for him alone. He comes quite frequently and spends a few days there when wearied of Paris. It is the highest possible honor for us, although I may frankly say that occasionally I find the way he looks at me to be somewhat *ennuyante*. Monsieur can understand that the mistress of this place and the mother of eight children must often find herself as to coiffure and dress quite otherwise than she would wish to be in the eyes of an artist. But I never say a word. If it gives the poor man a little joy to stare at one who recalls to him his sister and his youth he is gladly welcome to stare. Renaud says that he stares because I am yet beautiful and he an artist. But oh, *la!* that Renaud — he is an idiot always about his wife, and truly she ——

"But I hope that I have not bored monsieur?" She stopped short and looked earnestly into my face.

I leaned my elbows on the window-seat and shook my head.

"Bored? No, truly!"

SMOKE, OR FIRE?

MY DEAREST SUE:

I was simply paralyzed by your letter of congratulations! I never heard anything so crazy in all my life! The mere idea of my marrying again is too preposterous for words. I would not have known *what* man you referred to if you had not mentioned the name! Really, I wouldn't!

I am *not* engaged. Of course I wouldn't admit it if I was, but I really am *not*. I won't say that I wouldn't marry him under any circumstances, because I think any woman is very foolish to say that of any man in these days when, whoever you marry, you are so liable to marry others later; but I haven't told him that I'd marry him anyway, and I would tell you whether he had asked me or not if I could *see* you, but I hate putting personalities in letters. There is always the chance of one or the other becoming celebrated and the letters being printed later on, you know.

Of course I *did* meet him first at that house-party, and of course we *were* together most of the time. I thought that, as we were perfect strangers, we could be together without starting talk, but I found that it is not wise to be constantly with even a perfect stranger, because if you keep on being constantly with a man it starts talk right off, and the more

constantly you are with a man the less either of you cares to have it talked of. You know how I hate to be talked about anyhow, and how hard I try to avoid it. I have given up so many things on account of it — red parasols and traveling with a monkey, and other equally innocent pleasures — and it does seem to me as if I might have been allowed this one man; he really is such a dear, Sue — just wait until I introduce you — and *so* good-looking.

Now, as to these dreadful stories you have heard, I shall take them in order and answer *all* of them *completely*. In the first place, it's quite true about the motor ride — that is, the most of it is true. Of course I *was* frightened and I *wasn't* expecting the lightning flash. And neither was he. We had stopped under the tree to wait for the rain to be over. It was one of those sultry storms and I was so smothered that I was absolutely forced to put my veil up. I was *really* nearly smothered, Sue; you know how hot those veils and storms are, and I was fearfully frightened, and he was no more expecting the flash than I was. It was all horribly unfortunate, and we never have been able to find out who started *that* story. I think that whoever did it will be murdered if he ever lets it be known who he is. It was so mean to tell, anyway, because it must have been so perfectly evident that the flash of lightning was *utterly* unexpected by both of us.

Then there is the story about my going and spending the evening with him, and I'm sincerely glad that you've heard it and asked me about it, for although I know that you know me too well to believe that I would do such a thing, still I want to tell you

just what started *that*. You see, I went to stay with Carrie, utterly forgetting that he was staying with Dr. Kent. After I was settled I found that Carrie's husband doesn't allow Dr. Kent to enter the house, for no better reason than that he *didn't* marry Carrie. So mean of him, for Dr. Kent is a dear. But of course it left me in a pretty mess, for you couldn't ask one man without the other. I was quite miserable about it, for *you* know how fond I've always been of Dr. Kent, and so one evening I suddenly had the craziest idea jump into my head. I was returning from the Croydells' dinner rather early so as to pick Carrie up at a Symphony Concert, and I saw a light in the Dale house (you know Dr. Kent had it for the winter), and I entirely forgot that it was the night of the big medical banquet.

I thought that it would be such fun to surprise them both for five minutes, and I had unhooked the tube on the spur of the minute and told the coachman to stop the carriage there. It wasn't until after it was stopped and I was out and upon the steps that it occurred to me that the situation was a bit awkward. You know that I never get myself into a box, so of course I had to think fast.

I took my handkerchief and applied it to my eye as if I had met with some accident, and that made it quite right to ask for Dr. Kent. The horrid part was that of course Dr. Kent was out, but fortunately Clarence was in the study just off the hall and heard my voice and hurried to the door. He insisted upon my coming in, and so I went in and we *did* have an adorable time. I never knew that the Dales had such a charming house. If they want to rent it next

winter I think that we — I mean Dr. Kent — may take it again.

But I really didn't stay long, Sue, *honestly* I didn't; and I hadn't seen him for four days, you know, and of course I knew and he knew that it was our one chance while I was at Carrie's. I will confess that I *was* rather late in getting her, and her husband was awfully snappish over it — do you know, I didn't like him a bit after that — I always have wished that she had married Dr. Kent ever since. Fancy how heavenly it would have been! But that's the whole truth about the story of my going to see him, and you can see how false it is from start to finish. I should like to see myself going to any man, indeed.

But oh, Sue, we *did* have such fun. I had on my new cream lace gown and he absolutely had on slippers — it was too cozy and homelike for words. Only we both would have a big, sleepy-hollow chair in that room if *we* were furnishing it. Such horrid, creaky, squeaky chairs you never saw, my dear; I was in mortal fear of breaking them. If I ever have a place of my own again I mean to have good solid furniture — furniture that you can take some comfort in.

Now to the next things that have been told you. I almost think that it is beneath me to reply to them at all. To think of people having the face to say that we are always together and that only to look at us anyone would know that it was true! It really seems to me, Sue, that you might have spared yourself the trouble of repeating accusations like *that*, for they show that they must be lies, and I'm sure I

cannot see who could have started them unless it is Central or farmers who live away off in unfrequented places. I have made up my mind to *one* thing — and Clarence has made up his, too — and that is that we shall never, so long as we live, look at people we meet in the country, or remark on what *anyone* does or says. And if any man or woman is desperate, he or she, as the case may be, can come to our house and use the sleepy-hollow chair any time and for as long a time as he or she, as the case may be, chooses, and we shall *never* say a word, then or ever!

And now as to the tale about Paris, which is really apparently the worst of all to hush up. We are denying it right and left, but so many people know us that it seems well-nigh impossible to crush it out. I do assure you that I was positively in rags, my dear, *in rags*, and I made up my mind all of a sudden one day that as long as I hadn't a *thing* fit to wear I might as well run over to Aubrégiac and get a new outfit right through.

I never dally after I decide — as you know, dear — so I took my passage the very next morning and I sailed on the eighth. *No one* could have been more surprised than we were at meeting one another on the steamer. It was the greatest coincidence that I ever knew of, for he hadn't *an idea* that I was going. The voyage would have been perfect, only that the *whole* Lake family were on the boat, and I always shall believe that it was Mrs. Lake who started the story of our being engaged. It was natural that, knowing each other as well as we did, we should have been together, and we both were crazy over the moon nights (it was really very cloudy all the voy-

age, but we kept on hoping), so we were together more or less, and I haven't the faintest intention of denying *that;* but as to what Mrs. Lake said — well, all I can say is that I shall never really like any of them again. They stayed up until the most ungodly hours, Sue, and walked the whole time, and wherever it was quiet and a little bit out of the wind there Mrs. Lake would post herself until I wanted to cry. You know how few quiet places out of the wind there are, and then to have an old woman stand in one of them till after midnight! Nevertheless, of course it didn't matter as it would have mattered had we been engaged. I should think that anyone could see that, and I want to ask you, Sue, if we *had* been engaged would we *ever* have gone over on the same steamer? Wouldn't we have gone on separate steamers to keep people from saying that we were engaged — if for *nothing* else? Isn't it all too absurd on the very face of it? I declare, these stories fairly madden me because anyone with a grain of common sense would see at a glance what lies they *must* be.

We were at different hotels in Paris, and I had Madame Masjon with me, too, so everything was all correct, and I denied myself so much pleasure that it certainly does seem to me too cruel of people to talk so. We came back on different steamers, naturally, and then, besides, the dressmaker disappointed me and my frocks were not done, but no one pays any attention to that fact. People who desire to gossip seem to have no logic. Absolutely, if I had known how they were going to talk anyway, I do believe that I would have returned on the same

steamer. It will exasperate me as long as I live to think that I lost a whole week with him that I might have had.

I do wish that you could see my new things, dear — they are exquisite; much prettier than my trousseau the other time. I have hats and shoes to match *every* frock this time. And oh, my dear, my ring! I forgot to tell you about my ring; and I *must* tell you, for people are talking of *that*, too. It's some old family stones that I had reset in Paris. It is simply *gorgeous*. You never saw such a ring. I have a bracelet besides and I am going to have a necklace. They are all too lovely for words.

Indeed, dear Sue, if it wasn't for this horrid, confounded gossip I should be quite the happiest woman alive. I am very well and we *never* had such weather. To be sure, it does rain pretty steadily, but when people come to tea and it keeps on raining it gives such a good excuse for their staying to dinner, and I am *most* grateful that I am not visiting Carrie *now*. I am at Maude Lisle's, and she wants me to ask you if you can't come and spend October with her. I am going to be here most of the month and I shouldn't wonder if it was rather gay toward the middle. Maude is going to give some dinners and things and Clarence has a new motor, and I know you would like to meet him even if I am *not* going to marry him, as kind (?) friends informed you.

I don't want you to think from this letter that I am a bit vexed with you for having believed idle reports so quickly, for I am *not*. On the contrary I am sincerely glad that you wrote me as you did and gave me a chance to explain fully, for I think

frankness is so necessary among friends, and if I were really engaged you would naturally expect to be one of the first to be told. But Clarence says that I cannot keep *anything* to myself, and we have such a big bet up about that, that wild horses *could* not drag it out of me until after the first of the month. That is partly why these stories annoy me so terribly, and why I take so much time and pains in denying them. I would not have it get about for any money. People would fit the flash of lightning right in with that journey to Paris and my new things and this ring, and there would be no convincing them that it wasn't so. The more we denied it the more ridiculous we should appear, and you know how much I hate to appear ridiculous. I have always said that I would never marry a second time, and *I never shall.* And you know, Sue dear, that if I were really engaged to marry anyone I should most certainly tell you *at once;* so that alone proves the falseness of the whole story.

Now you'll come in October, won't you? Maude wants you to promise. I shall be leaving on the eighteenth or nineteenth — the date isn't positively set — and she says that she will be too horribly lonely if there isn't *someone* with her to talk over what will be happening then. You know how fond Maude always is, first of things, and then of talking them over, and she is almost as happy as I am these days. It was she who introduced me to Clarence at the house-party, so it seems especially fitting that I should be with her now, you know. The dear thing, she has absolutely her drawing-rooms all done over — isn't that almost touching? Do write that you

will be *sure* to come. I want you to meet Clarence, too — he is so handsome — and do you know he has taken the Dale house for five years? I didn't mean to tell you, but I'm sure that I don't see why I shouldn't. Taking the Dale house is no crime, heaven knows.

And now, Sue dear, in conclusion, I want to beg you if you hear any more stories about me to deny them *at once*. Say that you are *positive* that there is *not one word* of *truth* in *any* of them. I don't suppose you can deny the lightning flash because somebody must have surely seen us to have started it at all, and the trip to Paris is true, too, and my clothes are true, of *course;* but deny all the rest and fix up what you can't deny as well as you can, for I do detest being talked about, and then, too, I am *wild* to win that bet from Clarence.

And be sure to write favorably of October. I want you to come just as soon as you can — I have such a lot to tell you and I promise you that it's interesting. Maude says that we will have a love of a time when Clarence isn't here, and when he is here you and she can look all over my things together. I have *such* adorable things, stripes of lace and ribbon alternate, and hand-embroidered silk petticoats, and so on.

Good-bye, dear; *au revoir*.

As ever, yours affectionately,

NAN.

P. S. If anyone says the stones in my ring came from my grandmother, just let it go. I *did* say that they were from my grandmother *at first*. Oh, Sue, I

go half mad being tripped up on things I've said and completely forgotten! You see, I had no idea in the beginning that people were such *awful liars.*

But *now* I *really* think *very few* know what *truth* means.

WHEN JANET COMES MARCHING HOME

A Tragedy of Best Intentions

NOW this is the tale of Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts and their only daughter Janet, than whom they loved nothing better, and who returned their affection with her whole heart. It is an uninteresting tale, colorless, and having a moral, and I warn the frivolous reader to pass it by at once, since it is constructed of such material as can only entertain those who have either been parents or children.

Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts were quiet, respectable, pleasant, well-to-do people, in a small village of the same sort. They were simple of desire and habit and so were their surroundings. They were prudent, they were placid, they were happy; so was their life — so were their neighbors.

Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts had always loved one another. They had not married hastily, but had waited until Mr. Tibbetts was thirty-nine and Mrs. Tibbetts (that was then to be) was thirty-five, so that their house might be bought and paid for and furnished in advance. It was not in the nature of either to like to take risks or run into debt — so they didn't do it. When there was no risk, nor any chance of debt, they went on and married and settled down and Janet

came in due time to bless their union. Janet was not quite what a physiognomist or physiologist or psychologist might have expected of Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts, but, once born, there is no helping a baby, and they started in to raise her with a certain undefined fear and well-defined awe.

"This baby ought to have regular habits," Mrs. Tibbetts (who had very regular habits) said to Mr. Tibbetts (who had turned over on his other side at five, risen at six, and breakfasted at six-thirty every morning for twenty-seven years).

"Yes," said Mr. Tibbetts dubiously.

But Janet had no regular habits.

Instead, she carved out her own way through teeth and measles with an energy that was remarkable and victorious.

Before she was three years old she was running the family; at five she was running the house; when she had arrived at the mature age of twelve years her parents were merely existing at a respectful distance in her wake.

At sixteen Janet went away to somewhere else to school and took a scholarship which permitted her to go still farther away and become a collegiate graduate. When she came home summers she cleaned the house, cooked new ways, and replanted the flower garden. She knew so much that her mother hesitated to singe a chicken in her presence and her father felt apologetic over reading the newspaper in the same room where she might happen to be sitting. When she returned to college there was a perceptible change in the atmosphere — neither Mr. nor Mrs. Tibbetts said that it was a pleasant change, but they

singed chickens and read newspapers with a quiet appreciation that was eloquent in itself.

Janet graduated with honor and honors. She came home for a month, and then went to visit her room-mate, Mary Kew. At Mary Kew's she met a young man with prospects. He was promoted the day after they were introduced, and again three weeks later. The evening after his second promotion he and Janet became engaged, and then she went home to get her things ready to be married. Before her things were ready some one dropped dead of heart disease, and the young man was promoted again.

Janet was married. There was something very serene, stern, and prompt about the wedding. Mary Kew and another girl came for it, and Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts were held up to their respect and admiration by the superior force of Janet's own attitude toward them. They left on the same train with the bridal couple, and Mrs. Tibbetts looked around her house and tried to weep with desolation — but couldn't.

"I hope she'll be happy!" she said to Mr. Tibbetts.

"I hope he'll be happy, too," said Mr. Tibbetts, without the least intention toward innuendo or sarcasm.

Janet had gone to live in a city five hours' train-ride from home. It wouldn't have been five hours except that only one half-hour was traversed at express time, and the other four and a half had to be of that despairing concomitant known as "local." It could not be expected that she should

come home often, but she begged her parents to spend Christmas with her. Her husband was promoted again just before Christmas, but Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts did not go to visit him — they were quietly happy at home, and they left Janet to be rampantly happy on her own hook. There was no feeling of any description — only that every one did just as he and she pleased.

Every one did just as he and she pleased, and the years slipped happily by, one, two, and three.

Then Janet suddenly came to her senses and realized that she was neglecting her parents. The idea had never occurred to her before, but having occurred to her, she acted on it at once and went home by that afternoon's train.

Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts were about sixty now, and their grape vines and apple trees were all of a prosperous and "bearing" size, and they were each fairly stout and very especially addicted to routine living.

Janet came walking in just after the last supper-dish was washed and put on the shelf. Mrs. Tibbetts was just hanging Mr. Tibbetts's cup up on its hook when she heard her daughter's voice. Of course, she was delighted — her husband was delighted, too. Janet was twenty-five, with a clear complexion, brown eyes, and a smooth high pompadour of all her own hair. She wore a coat of black Persian lamb and a broadcloth skirt, her chin was held high (her husband had been promoted again within the past week), and she swept everything at a glance and made up her mind what was to be done.

She only stayed a day, and she did not take her

parents into her confidence because pleasant surprises are always agreeable, but the third morning after her return to town four men arrived by the early train, and Mr. Tibbetts, going to the door, discovered that his house was to be repapered from roof to floor in two days, and that by the order of Janet, who had selected the paper for every room with her own sweet eyes and kind heart.

There was nothing to be done but submit, move out the furniture, and cook for the workmen. They finished on the second night and Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts sat on two kitchen chairs amid their sheet-covered belongings, and looked at one another while they gasped for breath.

"Well, it was certainly kind of Janet," the father said at last, and the mother said "Yes," feebly enough.

They wrote a joint letter of thanks and learned slowly to assimilate their new aspect.

Then the next summer Janet came again, took another look around, and left them quaking.

Three days later carpenters appeared and swept away the dear old porch and the handy little wood-shed. They ran four Doric columns up to the garret in front, smashed in the parlor wall, put a bull's-eye glass window just where the long mirror hung, and dug a cellar under the kitchen to take the place of the demolished addition in the rear.

Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts looked on, big-eyed. Neither said one word. The Doric pillars affected them much as Janet herself did, and neither liked the passing of the wood-shed, but they restrained both feelings and speech and swept up the shavings with a self-control that was monumental.

When the carpenters went Mr. Tibbetts said: "There ain't much use twinin' the grapevines back over those pillars, they won't bear again during our lives."

Mrs. Tibbetts flicked a tear out of her eye.

"No," she assented meekly.

That evening they wrote to Janet and told her how nice the house looked and then they went out in front and looked at it, and sighed, and went in again.

"I wonder when she'll come next," Mr. Tibbetts said, as he took off his boots to go to bed a half-hour after. His wife made no reply. There was a choke in her throat, she had always been so fond of her window with its frame of tendrils and gently tapping leaves from the departed vines.

When Janet came the next summer she was jubilant. Her husband had just made a million. She wanted her parents to come to the city and live in her flat while she went abroad. Afterward they could go abroad while she built a granite palace with diamonds of white marble set in and stone urns on the cornice. But Mr. and Mrs. Tibbetts didn't want to go to town and live in a flat.

"We're so well fixed," Mrs. Tibbetts said, and her tone was imploring, for Janet's eyes were kiting here and there in a way that made her and her husband fairly shake in their shoes.

"We couldn't be better fixed," Mr. Tibbetts said, attempting to throw all the mighty strength of complete conviction into his words.

But Janet was not to be foiled in her duty, and while she was abroad a contractor came with a force, cut down the best apple tree, hoisted a water-tank

up on four stilts in its place, took up every floor in the house, installed various washbowls in little favorite closets, put a bathtub in the linen-room, and went away in September, leaving desolation in his wake.

Mrs. Tibbetts sat down and cried. She had stood in one basin and taken her bath out of another for almost fifty-five years, and she felt terribly over the change. Mr. Tibbetts didn't like it either. The first time that he attempted the new tub he handled the wrong handle and deluged himself out of a hole in the ceiling which he had supposed to be put there for purposes of ventilation.

"I don't know how we're ever going to stand it," he said to his wife while she was helping him out of his dripping apparel.

"This coat 'll never do again," said Mrs. Tibbetts.

"And to think we've got to write that letter saying how kind she is," said the father, who had never come so far toward real temper in all his life before.

"Sh-h-h," said his wife.

Then he held up his arms and leaned over, and she got his shirt off.

"Even my undershirt is soaked through," he said bitterly.

"Sh-h-h," said his wife.

That evening they wrote the letter.

In the winter that followed the new water system all froze up, and as the contractor had completely done away with the pump that never froze up, Janet's parents had a hard time. As they worked with iron rods and salt and hot cloths Mr. Tibbetts said

wrathfully: "I s'pose we'll have electric lights next, an' be left in the dark without a candle."

"You mustn't say that," said Mrs. Tibbetts.

"I shall if I want to," said Mr. Tibbetts.

"You'll bu'st that pipe out at the joint if you bang at it like that," said his wife.

"I'll bu'st it if I want to," said the husband, "I'll bu'st myself if I don't bu'st suthin'."

This was the nearest that Mr. Tibbetts had ever come to swearing and his wife felt cowed. She looked at him furtively.

"Darn it!" said Mr. Tibbetts.

"My dear —" she began.

"Shut up!"

It was the first harsh word in all their long life of love together. Mrs. Tibbetts burst into tears and climbed the cellar stairs to weep above. To this had Janet brought her parents.

But she didn't weep long, for the disjointed waterworks had led to trouble in the linen-room — I mean, in the bathroom — and the dining-room ceiling was suffused with a large damp spot. To this also had Janet brought her parents.

The next summer she came again. They greeted her with fear and trembling; there was no room for any other sentiment in their hearts now.

But Janet was troubled herself this time.

"Do you know," she said, "George has accepted the contract to build ten thousand miles of railroad and ninety-three towns along the line in Northern Kenibahakoogee, and he'll be gone ten years, and I don't see how I can stay behind or how I can go and leave you, and I'm almost insane."

She looked at them and they looked at one another; neither knew where Kenibahakoogee was, but both knew that ten years was a long time.

"I think you ought to go with your husband," said Mrs. Tibbetts.

"Yes, by all means," said Mr. Tibbetts.

"But my duty to you two?" said Janet.

"Never mind us," said Mr. Tibbetts, "don't you give one thought to us."

"No," said Mrs. Tibbetts, "we're all right."

Her tone trembled in her anxiety to make it sufficiently impressive.

"But I'm all you've got," said Janet.

"Never mind," said Mr. Tibbetts, "we've got each other, too, you know. Now you go right along with George and never think of us."

"No, don't think of us," said the mother, "there isn't a thing that we need only to know that you're happy."

Janet went. She went in a month's time. The day after the steamer sailed Mr. Tibbetts drove in town and bought a pump and arranged to have it put back through the hole that they had kept covered by a board and tripped over for eighteen months. The bathtub was disconnected and put in the loft, the shelves for linen were taken out of the loft and replaced against the wall; they had the village paper-hanger come up and rake off all the satiny panels with gilt molding that had driven them wild for two years, and Mrs. Tibbetts, with the joy of a bride, picked out a new paper with a sprig alternate with a geometrical figure for the parlor and a plain blue sprinkled with purple asters for

the dining-room. After that they had the Doric pillars pulled down and the bull's-eye window cut square.

"It looks kind of Christian again — don't it?" said Mrs. Tibbetts, with real unfeigned satisfaction as they stood out in front on the first evening after the workmen finished, and contemplated their improvements.

"That's the evil of these higher educations," said Mr. Tibbetts; "why, Ellen, if we'd never let Janet go away to school, she'd never have met a fellow like that man she's got, she'd have married some one in the village and had a nice cottage and been content and let us do things for her, and we'd have had the old apple tree and the grapevines and never suffered nothin' like these last five years." His voice broke with feeling, and his wife pressed his hand hard.

"Nobody can have everything in this world," she reminded him gently.

He gulped down his feelings.

"I know, Ellen, I know; but it seems like Fate come down awful heavy on you and me in the end. Still I don't mean to repine."

"No," said his wife, "you see, she meant to be kind."

"Yes, I know, she meant to be kind. And we had nothin' in the wide world to do but to sit still and bear it."

Then they went into their reantiquated house and went to bed.

Peace reigned over, above, and all around. They had had the connection severed in the windmill, and

they knew that Janet was on the high seas. They drew long sighs as they slept. It was the first peace that they had known since Janet first came upon them.

THE TWELVE LITTLE BROILERS

A Tale of the South

IT was because Mr. Craig was a Northerner and didn't understand. It was because he was a newcomer and had not yet learned. It was because he looked to the law and knew not that another and higher law was prevalent in that vicinity.

And so he had Uncle Peter arrested for the theft of the twelve little broilers — and so Uncle Peter went to jail. The pity of it! — the sadness of it! — but it is only the story of it which I set out to tell.

Uncle Peter was a darky — a very old, white-haired, white-bearded darky, who had lived all his life upon the same land and served the same family well and faithfully. The land was the Fenway land and the family was the Fenway family, and the ties which bound Uncle Peter fast in his fealty were of a quality which no Emancipation Proclamation could affect in the slightest degree. Uncle Peter bowed his head and said "mas'r" just as humbly and reverently in 1900 as he had said it in 1850, and the stately old gentleman whom he thus addressed was as great in his eyes and as worthy of admiration as ever. Uncle Peter had seen the war drain all the young blood out of the family and had

seen the great estate become a waste and then dwindle away; he had seen the effects of the war slowly but surely absorb even the shadows of the one-time glory; he had seen all the joy swept out of life, had seen the colonel surrender every last atom of luxury, had seen the colonel's sister—Miss Nancy—become frail and tottering long before her years of age; he had seen the great Hall — called The Fens — reduced by fire to one wing, had seen the stables reduced to one mule, had seen the corps of twenty house servants, and the farm equipment of some seventy hands, reduced to himself. And through it all his faithfulness had gone unchanged — his courage had never wavered. On the contrary, the unvoiced tenor of his spirit's song was a complete contentment that he had been the bearer — or sharer — of all the burdens, and now at seventy-five he still labored as patiently and willingly as ever from dawn to dark, and sometimes before and after.

Uncle Peter's labors were very arduous. When one is the sole survivor of nearly a hundred pair of hands, and when the traditions of the whole hundred are the very bone and sinew of one's mentality, the result is apt to be productive of work. To be sure, the thousand acres had shrunk to five, and the Hall was only a remnant of what it had been, but Uncle Peter took no account of that. The small strip of land which ran from the highroad in front back to the little "branch" at the foot of the slope was still an estate in his eyes, and the poor old building whose scars were mantled by merciful ivy, and whose roof his own hands had patched within and without time and again, was as nobly "the Hall" to him now

as it had ever been in the days when the pile of stones in the potato patch fifty feet from the side wall had been part of the chimney piece in the gorgeous "yellow damask drawing room." The delicate old lady who wandered among the roses like some wraith of past beauty was as fair to his sight as she had been before the loss of her father, her lover, and two of her brothers in the same battle, had turned her hair white in a single week. And as for the colonel! — well, when it came to an expression of opinion as to the colonel, Uncle Peter could only lay his hand upon his heart and be silent — and whomever he was speaking to divined and respected.

In the years that had passed since the war the evergreen hedge which had bordered the house and kitchen gardens had grown high and thick, and it may be divined that the life led behind its interwoven branches was one of proud and pitiful privation. Only Uncle Peter — and God — knew how pitiful. Often and often the meals which he served with stately precision were so slender as to be a mere farce in their serving, and one winter — one bitter winter — it had come to pass that every morning when he tapped at his mistress' door with the provision of morning fire, she had invariably refused it, saying that it was not needed. That had been the lowest bottom touched. The Fenway properties had been shrinking in ratio with the Fenway lands for years. The rise of mighty fortunes is always starvation somewhere, and the many must each surrender a little — or all — to make a millionaire. There was a gigantic and admirably calculated railway deal —

and old Colonel Fenway gave up cigars henceforth. There was a Wall Street *coup* — and Miss Nancy refused to have a fire in her bedroom that winter. Uncle Peter was never present at the reading of the mail and would not have been able to connect the receivership of the "O. & B." with an emptied purse if he had been, but he realized that winter that the moment had come for him to act, and as soon as the spring allowed of new enterprise he set about meeting the wolf at the door face to face and battling with him to his finish.

When Uncle Peter instituted the poultry yard he knew exactly what he was about. Perhaps it was more instinct than reasoning which guided his actions, but whichever it was, he comprehended that under the conditions failure would be out of the question. He knew that all the people at the university cherished the deepest affection and respect for his beloved master and mistress. If he did not word it so within himself, he nevertheless understood perfectly that there was not one among them who did not — out of the gracious sweetness of their courtesy — give to his "family" their old position with a sincerity which counted itself honored in the giving. When — on the first Monday in each month — Miss Nancy was "at home" to her friends the old man — dressed in his best and officiating as butler — observed with pride the number and quality of those whom he announced. He knew that only the most inclement weather was ever allowed to interfere with that reception. Everyone who could possibly manage it never failed to take the four-mile drive once a month just so as to shake hands with the

"dear old colonel" and to sit for a few minutes beside Miss Nancy — Miss Nancy, superb in her grandmother's real lace collar, her great-grandmother's pearl comb, and a silk brocade whose darns were too many to be noticeable. The atmosphere of past splendor was too strong for any of its witnesses to ever be able to devise a way to somewhat ameliorate the present hardships. The wall of pride was as close as the wall of evergreens. Kindly impulses and friendly bits of help saw no possible way to offer themselves, and stood in the outer darkness of despair.

All this Uncle Peter intuitively understood and took into consideration in the institution of his poultry yard. It cannot be said that he builded better than he knew, but he certainly built as well as he knew and — up to the episode of the twelve little broilers — the end certainly justified the means.

Uncle Peter did not live under the roof of his master except in a figurative sense. He resided at the foot of the slope in a small cabin which had served as part of the laundry establishment in the good old times. The Federal troops had burned the outlying servants' quarters, and the winters since had done away with those of the house people, but Uncle Peter's home had been left intact, and he there lived happily with his seventh wife and his five youngest children. The domestic experiences of the old man had been varied; one of his wives had gone north and written for him to join her — an invitation which he had never for one instant contemplated accepting; another was married to some one else in the vicinity. Not that any of it matters.

His cabin was pleasantly situated only a few yards from the shallow little stream. It was an ideal spot for the cultivation of anything, whether faithful devotion or chickens. Uncle Peter did both, and Heaven blessed his efforts.

Every Wednesday and Saturday anyone riding or driving along the pike at eight in the morning would have encountered the old man and his youngest son, Aurora Borealis, on their way with a choice array of the finest poultry snugly packed in the bottom of the wagon. Such turkeys! such capons! such fat young roosters! And — be it added *en passant* — such prices! — for Uncle Peter's offerings were bargains and nothing else. No market could possibly enter into competition with him, and no market man ever attempted it. The university was admitted to be his and his alone; no one there ever bought poultry of anyone but Uncle Peter, and Uncle Peter never sold to anyone except the dwellers on "the Lawn." No difficulties ever arose, no one ever cavilled, no one ever complained when Uncle Peter — generally most scrupulous — got his orders mixed and handed over the turkey which he had abstracted from one coop to the owner of some other chicken establishment. The unwritten code decreed that when one missed a pair of fowls those identical fowls should be delivered — all dressed — by Uncle Peter upon his next trip; but sometimes — under stress of haste or other contingencies — interchange occurred which among a less kindly disposed community might have caused difficulties to arise. Not so here, however. The mistress merely summoned her cook and commanded her thus: "'Liza, you go all

along till you find where Uncle Peter left our four pullets, and tell whoever has them to give them to you and tell you what they paid for them." The result was always fully satisfactory, and Uncle Peter was never allowed to suffer a moment's uneasiness over his little mistakes. His poultry yard was a great success, and its revenue kept the Fenway family and their dependents.

It was the third summer after the inauguration of the enterprise that the Craigs came down from Washington and leased the pretty little house which lay just between The Fens and the corporation limits. Mr. Craig had come from his own north-westerly point of the compass to do some business in the nation's capital. When he had discovered that the business would keep him there for six months at least, he had written back for his family — the same consisting of a pretty, sweet-faced little wife and an adorable baby; and then when Washington had become unendurable (as Washington has a way of becoming about the middle of May) a kind fate had led them to hear of, and then to rent, "The Primroses." The place was near enough for Mr. Craig to get to it for Saturdays and Sundays, and it was far enough away for Mrs. Craig and the baby to consider themselves in paradise. They had a man, and a maid, and a cow, and a garden. And then — as if there was to be no limit to country joys — they bought a hen and her brood of twelve downy chicks, the cunningest "pure-breed" yellow puff-balls that the Craig baby had ever toddled after.

Mrs. Craig was as happy a disposition as ever absorbed sunbeams straight into its composition.

Her husband, her baby, her home, her cow, and her chickens all filled her, each with its own variety of individual bliss. The university ladies coming out to call upon the stranger were charmed and delighted at her enthusiasm. They made her cordially welcome to their circle, they praised her to one another; they did more, they praised her to Miss Nancy on the occasion of their next ceremonious presentation there, and Miss Nancy's interest was awakened to such an extent that she expressed a desire to have Mrs. Craig call upon her. The lady to whom her wish was made manifest stopped on her way home to tell the recipient of the invitation what honor was in store for her. She told her who and what the Fenway family were, and how much a courtesy from them meant. She omitted no detail of the past grandeur in her recital, but — because she was Southern and understood — she slurred over all the reverse of the shield, saying not one word of the poverty and only one carefully casual word as to "troubles." The stranger within the gates listened with deep interest and came nearer understanding than might have been expected. She accepted Miss Nancy's kindness in the most reverent manner, and passed the intervening weeks in trying to imagine how it would all be. Being herself thoroughly democratic, her very heart was thrilled over the prospect of meeting the lord and lady of The Fens, and not even the disappearance of her hen and that hen's progeny upon the eve of the long-awaited day had the power to dampen her pleasurable anticipations.

The next afternoon when — after a mile's drive

with her friend beneath the hot sun — she found herself in the avenue of gigantic elms, and then in the somber hallway of the old, old mansion, her modern — and Western — emotions rose so tumultuously as to almost choke her. She could not see the ancient man-servant who was bowing low as he drew back the drawing-room portières — she hardly heard her own name as he announced it — but she never in all her after life will forget the wonder of that lofty, tattered, shabby room, with its splendid portraits and mirrors, its ragged cornice and shattered cut-glass chandelier, its miserable furniture, and — in the midst of all — the stately old gentleman advancing to greet her — the delicate, cameo-cut features of the invalid who, from her chair by the screened fireplace, smiled a welcome with a smile that ignored its own surroundings completely.

The day was long past when wine and cake and all species of sweets, home-made or "sent down," could be offered to the visitors in that room, but no one thought any more of that than of the other ghosts which slipped about among the throng. The conversation was pleasant, kindly in its tone, broad in its spirit; each received the same welcoming looks, each left with the same cordial invitation to return. The choke in the little stranger's throat grew all the time and swelled to tears when she stooped to make her adieus to the chatelaine in the big chair.

"Oh, I wish I might do something," she cried, irrelevantly, impulsively, to her friend when they were in the carriage and driving away from the great, pillared entrance. "Can't something be done? To

be royal like that and have to live like that! I think it's awful. Why can't some help be given them?"

The friend laid her hand gently over the intertwined and trembling fingers.

"My dear child, no one can do anything," she said; "that is the hardest problem of life — to minister where pride and privation go hand in hand."

Nothing was said about the poultry yard because a tacit interpretation of the doctrine of *noblesse oblige* always suppressed all mention of Uncle Peter's scheme of industry.

Mr. Craig — coming down that Saturday and bringing another man with him — was regaled with the whole tale. After his wife had relieved her surcharged heart as to The Fens, she remembered the disaster of the hen and told him that, too.

"Wasn't it too bad?" she said. "They were growing *so* fast. In another week we should have had twelve nice little broilers."

He laughed and kissed her. And then he had the horse put in the surrey and they all went to drive.

It was on their way home that the first act of the drama of Uncle Peter occurred. As they were skirting the foot of the slope behind The Fens (without knowing that The Fens were anywhere in the vicinity) Mrs. Craig gave so sudden a cry that she woke the baby, who had fallen asleep in her arms.

"What's the matter?" her husband exclaimed, turning quickly.

"The chickens! — our chickens!" she cried, pointing, and — following her indication — Mr. Craig looked and saw in the edge of the wood a hen and her family — the latter being unmistakably the

twelve yellow balls which four weeks' good living had developed into twelve lively, long-legged, promising "broilers." The chimney of a cabin showed through the treetops, but Mr. Craig did not stop for that. He handed the reins to the other man, jumped out, grabbed the hen and threw her into the surrey, and then, twisting the lap robe into an improvised sack, gathered six of the chickens into it with a rapidity which was marvelous.

Just as the seventh embryo rooster flew through his rightful owner's hands with a piercing squawk Uncle Peter appeared in the edge of the wood. Uncle Peter's face was a study of complete bewilderment as he perceived what was transpiring.

"Wha' yo' doin' da'?" he demanded. "Wha' fo' yo' kotch dem chick'ns?"

Mr. Craig never stopped to consider why the face before him looked vastly aggrieved and not in the slightest degree ashamed.

"You old thief!" he cried, shaking his fist vigorously at the patriarchal form. "I have your own admission of your own guilt, and you are going to hear from this."

Then he got into the surrey and drove off, leaving Uncle Peter gazing after him more in sorrow than in anger, and totally unconscious that he had meant anything serious by his words.

But poor old Uncle Peter learned his mistake most miserably soon, and that through a combination of disasters such as rarely concur in the world — thank Heaven. On Monday morning the train which should have carried Mr. Craig and his friend to Washington was rendered two hours late by an

accident. Mr. Craig — very much annoyed at the delay — decided to stroll around a bit instead of pacing the dirty platform. During the stroll he encountered and recognized Uncle Peter, come in town early to make some necessary purchase. Mr. Craig had his friend — who had heard the sinner admit the sin — right beside him, so that he was in a position to swear out a warrant and have it executed at once. Uncle Peter went to jail on default of a very small bond (for the magistrate understood even if the plaintiff did not), and Mr. Craig, having seen the trial set for the date of his next home-coming, placidly boarded the train and went on to Washington.

It was to Aurora Borealis — who had accompanied his father to town on that unlucky day — that the trial of returning alone and recounting what had occurred fell. The effect was harrowing enough, Uncle Peter being the mainstay of two families, and the colonel finding the sum total of his ready cash somewhat below the sum total of the bail. The last of the Fenways was too proud to go and borrow, and there was not time to enter into any very extensive transactions for raising money. The noon hours of the ill-fated Monday passed unimproved, and the absence of their butler did not inconvenience his master and mistress in one way, for it took away all their appetite for the meal which he was not there to serve.

It was a very warm day, and the air was heavy and suggestive of approaching storms. Mrs. Craig, finding the baby unable to sleep as usual, had just brought her out upon the shady lawn and begun to

amuse her by throwing rose leaves into her hands and tossing her up among the white syringa branches when the solution of the problem loomed suddenly before her eyes. I say "the solution of the problem," because such was the real truth, but Mrs. Craig, not knowing of the existence of any problem, was naturally not seeking its solution, and did not know exactly *what* the thing at her gate might be called. She felt that at some period of the world's history it must have had a name — but what?

It was a most ancient and curious affair; a species of wicker bath chair mounted on ridiculously small wheels, the spokes of the latter being slender to a most alarming degree. The long, curved shafts which coyly embraced the mule who was the motive power were also exceedingly fragile, and the footman's seat behind was as delicately poised as if designed for a fairy. It bore a large, covered basket carefully tied upon its support, and the basket's twin hung under the shaped swell of the seat.

No one could blame Mrs. Craig for standing still and staring open-mouthed upon this strange relic; but the next minute she was very nearly stricken senseless by seeing no less a personage than Colonel Fenway getting out of the dilapidated old rattletrap. And such an astonishing Colonel Fenway, too!

An old and torn straw hat, torn and ragged clothes, patched blue overalls, cracked and gaping boots, dirty hands, a shambly, stoop-shouldered walk.

Mrs. Craig stood motionless. She was sure it was the colonel, and she could not grasp any clew to the call and the costume.

He was unfastening the straw basket on the footman's seat and did not turn toward her until it hung upon his arm. Then he advanced, hat in hand, smiled a little, and addressed her in the broadest negro dialect.

"Yo' alls want ah buy any chick'ns tah-day?"

Poor little Mrs. Craig, with the glamour of the lofty remoteness, the exquisite courtesy, and the *entourage* of shattered grandeur still fresh in her mind! But her intuition guided her eyes away from the face of the old gentleman, and she tried not to stammer as she said:

"Why? — have you any to sell? How much are they?"

"I do' know, ma'am. The colonel — Colonel Fenway — y' know? — he ask me will I tek dese heah chick'ns 'roun' fo' him. They done 'res' his man Peter an' he ain' got no way 'a get 'em to folks. I do' know nuffin' 'bout 'em mahseff."

Mrs. Craig felt a painful stab of apprehension.

"Who arrested the man?" she asked.

"I do' know, ma'am. I do' know nuffin. The co'nel, he ask me will I tote 'em 'roun' fo' him, 'n' I done say I will."

Mrs. Craig glanced toward the gate and saw a hand like oldest and smoothest ivory lying on the reins. Her heart was in her throat.

"Let me see the chickens," she said, unsteadily.

The colonel removed the cover.

There lay the six of her twelve little broilers whom her husband had *not* been able to catch. She gasped. It all swam suddenly across her mental vision.

"Will — will the old man be put in prison?" she cried, in great distress.

The colonel towered up to his full height.

"He is in prison, ma'am," he said, clearly and distinctly, "but he will not sleep there to-night, be assured of that."

Mrs. Craig caught up the baby and moved quickly away.

"Just wait until I get my purse," she said, thickly, and then she went into the house.

"I haven't any change," she said when she returned a minute later, "but here's a bill. Won't you ask the colonel to credit me with it and let his man supply me regularly with poultry? I'll keep these now."

She put the bill into his shaking hand without lifting her eyes to the face above again. He set the basket down at her feet.

"Thank you, ma'am," he said, very simply, and went out and drove back in the same direction whence he had come.

An hour later she saw him again, dressed in his usual garb, and driving the old wagon in which Uncle Peter was in the habit of conveying himself and his wares about. He was evidently on his way to rescue his faithful servant, and that he was successful was evidenced by their return together just at sundown.

Mrs. Craig had two of her little broilers for tea that night, and the evening she spent in writing to her husband. As a result there never was any trial. Mr. Craig withdrew his accusation and made Uncle Peter a handsome present to atone for the injustice

perpetrated when he had him arrested for chicken stealing. Uncle Peter bore him no malice whatever; on the contrary, he felt a gentle pleasure in being able to return good for evil. And this was how he did it.

The accusation was withdrawn Friday afternoon, and that night the hen and the six remaining chickens disappeared again.

"Never mind," Mrs. Craig said, laughing, as they stood by the empty coop Saturday morning; "we understand now."

But they were not prepared for the magnanimity of the next development.

Just as they were sitting down to dinner Aurora Borealis appeared in the dining-room door which opened on the garden. He had the covered basket on his arm.

"Mawnin'," he said, with a bow that echoed the colonel's own. "My daddy say yo' please akeep dese heah chick'ns wid his compellments 'n' they ain' *no — bill — on — 'em.*"

They opened the basket and saw the last six of their little broilers laid out therein upon a bed of cabbage leaves. Mr. Craig gave the small darky a quarter, and did not trust himself to look at his wife until both had heard the clicking of the gate.

Then:

"Well, love?" he asked, pointedly.

"I'm just a jumble of conflicting emotions," she confessed.

"I own to similar sensation," he said, patting her cheek, "but pull yourself together; we must become acclimated — that's all."

HIS TERRIBLE FATHER

PRINCE EITEL sat beside his toy poodle and pondered deeply.

Prince Eitel was not really a prince — they only gave him the title by courtesy, because a real Prince Eitel was his godfather. But if his title was not real, his toy poodle was, nevertheless, a real toy poodle; and his pondering — ah, that was the most utter reality of all!

Prince Eitel was barely four years old, and no one in the great house supposed him capable of meditation. His *gouvernante* treated him like a precious little pet doll, his nurse classed him with his baby sister, Röschen, and his parents hardly thought about him at all.

It was their attitude toward him which he was now engaged in considering. Within his little brain a crisis had arisen, and he sought a solution of the problem. For his mother was very dear to him, and he could bear it no longer. "It" was the life that that dear mother lived; no one would have given him credit for having observed; but he *had* observed —and only too well.

The mother of Prince Eitel was the sweetest mother alive. Her eyes were sweet and her lips were very sweet; her bosom, where his head rested during

those brief and blissful minutes which she sometimes gave to him, was warmest, softest and sweetest of all. Her hands were white and jeweled, her finger nails were as round and pink as his own, her hair was as soft and pretty as Röschen's, and her voice sang even when she whispered. Her dresses were forever wonderful, and her ways were more wonderful yet. It was like a fairy tale to look and listen when she was by. Eitel worshiped her. When she was at the piano he loved to sit close by the window and hear the music float out into the garden and up to him. It filled his eyes with tears often and often, and then he would remember his father, and his heart would swell to bursting.

For his mother was the victim of his father's ill-treatment, and the little child who was supposed to be too young to know anything knew everything.

The father of Prince Eitel was almost gigantic, and as dark as any story-book ogre. His eyes were big and fearfully black, and his mustache was worse yet. He had a most awful voice, and whomever he spoke to always minded instantly. When he played on his violin he would call out sharply in a strange tongue, and the dear little mother at the piano would play quite differently at once, or he would stamp with his foot and she would hurry her fingers and look up so anxiously to know if she was doing right. And Eitel would feel his tiny fist clinch in spite of himself. And yet he was supposed to know nothing.

The terrible father never allowed Eitel's mother out of his sight. She could not have her coffee until he was dressed, she was not allowed to go upon the terrace unless he went too, and while he wrote all

the afternoon she was forced to sit near him in her low chair, or lie on the couch by the window. His cruelty extended even to the night, for when Eitel carried her a bouquet on the morning of her fête, he found her lying in bed, and the father was holding her tight in his arm, and would not let her sit up until she said "Please" correctly in German. (For — I must remark in parenthesis — the one fault of this faultless mother was her German, which sounded all wrong, even to her worshiping son.) Eitel felt distinctly the cruelty and injustice of all this, and he was conscious of a mighty longing to be bigger — to be stronger — to be able to succor his mother in her dire distress — to be able to drag her out from the clutches which martyred her — and to carry her off to some safe, quiet spot where she might live, henceforth and forever, alone with Röschen and himself.

But how to accomplish that so-much-to-be-desired end!

That was the question, and to its solving the small boy was bending all his ingenuity. There was no one to whom he could turn, for he was well aware that he was not considered old enough to know anything. And he knew everything, and *so* well — so painfully well. It was very trying to be considered so infantine, now that he wore a belted blouse and leather leggings and ——

His meditations were suddenly interrupted by the sound of wheels upon the driveway. Some one was coming, or else some one was going. He ran to the balcony to see.

It was Conrad with the carriage, and a trunk was

fastened upon the carrier behind. Somebody was going away. It could not be the mother, or she would have come to bid him good-by. It must be the father. Yes, it was the father, for he came out now with his gray ulster on his left arm and — Eitel choked — his right around the poor, maltreated mother. She had her handkerchief to her eyes, and he thought that she must have been beaten to cry so. The father stopped beside the carriage and added insult to injury, by first laughing at her and then kissing her.

"For only two days," he said, in a jeering tone — "for only two days!"

She cried worse at that, and shook all over.

Eitel was furious over her suffering.

Then the father turned away and gnawed his mustache for a minute, and then turned again to her and said:

"Treasure, it is important that I go, but if you behave like this, I shall telegraph instead."

Eitel did not know what "telegraph" meant, but he understood that his mother was being threatened, and when he saw her cease weeping and become suddenly calm, he divined that the threat must have been dire indeed. His father kissed her again, and then stepped into the carriage and drove away. He looked back until the turn by the oak tree, and then he was all gone. For a few seconds longer the sound of the wheels came through the woods, and then that faded too.

And Eitel saw his mother alone below him.

He went to the corner nearest her and leaned over the railing.

"Oh, my mother!" he called, loudly. It was the first time that he had ever called to her in his life like that.

She raised her head and saw him.

"Thou, Eitel!" she said, in her funny German. "Have a care that thou fallest not. Where is thy *gouvernante?*"

"She sleeps," he answered; "she sleeps, and Olga is rocking Röschen's cradle. I am all alone. May I come down and stay with thee, my mother?"

The mother hesitated a little, and then, looking up and seeing how wistful was the small face leaning above her, she said:

"Yes, come."

So he ran indoors and down the stairs and out to where she waited on the terrace, and, climbing beside her there, he pressed his little body close in the circling of her arm and rejoiced to feel her quivering breaths become quiet and regular once more.

"Thou art very unhappy, my mother," he faltered after a little, trying to overcome the timidity that their very slight acquaintance had bred in him.

She sighed.

"I will guard thee," he declared, valiantly. "I shall soon be a man."

She smiled faintly.

He rested his head against her, and his soul was filled with love and longing. To sit like this within the curving of her silken sleeve and know that the father was gone and that she was all his — his alone — oh, he could never bear to see her frightened again — surely there must be a way to save her. He looked up at all the blue sky and at all the winged

birds, and his eyelids grew heavy with the desperation of his determinings. And then he slept and woke hours later under his own lace curtains, upheld by his own gilt eagle, and looked around to see madame by the window and to hear Röschen cooing in the room beyond.

It was the late afternoon. Madame smiled when she saw that he was awake, and told him that he was to be dressed and have his tea in the rose-room with his mother, and that he must be very good, indeed, because his mother was feeling so badly.

When he was dressed he hurried to the rose-room, but a terrible disappointment awaited him. Joseph told him that visitors had come and that his mother was in the salon, where no Prince Eitel of four years had ever been allowed to set his foot. He went sadly back to have his tea with madame, and afterward, when he played alone with his soldiers, he felt his resolution developing shape, and felt himself becoming capable of its undertaking. It was too bitter to suffer her suffering any longer. And why should they suffer when the wide forest lay so near and held such unlimited freedom within its depths — and always the so-much-to-be-feared father was safely absent.

That night, at midnight, Prince Eitel was wakened by Olga. She stood there with one candle, and his mother's maid, Josephine, stood beside her with another. It seemed that he was to be carried to his mother. Olga carried him, and Josephine carried the candle. They found his mother sitting up in bed. She had been crying and she could not speak when they came in. But she held out her arms to

Eitel, and Olga put him into the nest-like place beside her, and they carried the candles away, and the prince was in Paradise — a paradise of caressing hands and kissing lips that lulled him to the most ecstatic dreamings which his small brain had ever compassed.

In the morning when he awoke she was sleeping still. Her hair was loose around her head, and her pretty, bare arms were crossed upon her bosom. He sat up in bed and worshiped in silence. Oh, how happy they would all be if only the father would never, never, return!

He leaned above her and kissed her cheek.

She smiled and stirred and opened her eyes, and saw him and cried out.

"It is not the father," he told her, reassuringly. She closed her eyes and two great tears forced themselves out between her lashes and stood wet upon her cheeks.

"I love thee, my mother," he told her, with a mad desire to be able to comfort her completely — to assure her that all was to be well, and that soon, too.

"Yes, yes," she murmured.

Olga came soon after and carried him away to be dressed, but his plan was complete now, and his mind was only busy with its details. As he ate his breakfast he slipped one roll into his blouse when madame was not looking. The roll was one of the details — a material detail, but a necessary one. The ingenuity needful for the inception of a plot had been his — now came the daring upon which would hang — must hang — its final triumph.

After his breakfast he was summoned to the terrace

to walk with his mother. It was a beautiful morning, and the grass was a green sky starred with dewdrops. The deer came out of the edge of the forest, and ate a little, and stared a little, and then went back into their shadowy home.

"I wish we might walk in the forest," he suggested, looking earnestly up into his mother's face.

"As thou wilt," she said, with her faint, sad smile.

"May we walk in the forest now?" he asked.

"If thou wishest it," she replied.

And she gathered her skirt a little into her hand and went with him down the wide steps and along the walk.

The forest was very large and very dark. Olga said that bears lived in it, and that bears were gnomes who had gotten tired staying down in the earth, and so had come up to wrap themselves in fur and play in the air for a while. Madame said that there were fairies in all the trees, and that they sat on the leaves and sang at night. Eitel had heard them singing. Oh, the forest was a wonderful place!

They followed the path in silence for a long way; sometimes it mounted up along the edge of the ravine and sometimes it descended to the level of the winding brook; here and there it opened widely beneath the great beech trees, and then again it narrowed and was hardly of a space sufficient to permit of their keeping side by side.

Finally the mother stopped, and said:

"It is a long ways that we are from home."

Eitel's face flushed suddenly — his heart seemed to beat tremendously loud.

"There is a short way home," he said. "Madame

leads me by it often. It goes" — he stopped and looked about — "it goes just by that tree there," he said, pointing.

His mother looked doubtful.

"It will be better to return by the path," she said.

Eitel panted with excitement.

"No, my mother," he urged. "Thou art weary. Return only by the shorter way. I know it quite well."

His mother took her skirt freshly up in her hand.

"As thou wilt," she said, with her faint smile, and together they entered the wood.

The trees were very tall and very thick, and squirrels darted and rabbits started here and there. They walked some time before either spoke, and it was only when they came to where the underbrush was not cleared that the mother stopped suddenly.

"Thou hast mistaken, Eitel," she said; "here may we not pass."

Eitel's breath came and went tumultuously, and he did not answer at once.

"We have gone astray," the mother said.

"No," he declared, then, "we did not go astray. We are lost in the forest, because I wished it."

"Because thou wished it!" she cried, in astonishment, looking down at the small, upturned face that was pink with excitement; "because thou wished it!"

Then he threw his arms tightly around her knees and pressed his cheek hard against her.

"Oh, my mother," he exclaimed, passionately, "I have brought thee away so that we may live forever

here in peace and happiness. The father can never find thee more — can never make thee to weep again. At night I shall hold thee and kiss thee, and thou shalt be so happy, here safe in the forest."

She sank down upon the damp, leafy soil under their feet, and drew him down with her.

"Oh, Eitel, Eitel!" she murmured, and began to weep.

He strove to comfort her, kissing her over and over, and after a while — a long while — she spoke to him.

"Who has taught thee such tales?" she asked.

"No one, my mother."

"What has led thee to think so of thy father?"

"Because——" he stammered—"because——"

She clasped him close in her arms.

"It is my fault," she said, gently — "all my fault. I have thought my son was very little, and all the while he was growing."

Then she smiled a little, drying her eyes.

"What should we eat here in the forest?" she asked.

He felt vaguely that the ground was slipping from under his feet, but he put his hand into his blouse and felt a pride in his resources as he drew forth the roll.

"For thee, my mother," he said. "I am not hungry."

She looked at the roll and caught the little, little hand that proffered it, and kissed it.

"Dear little child!" she said, in the sweetest voice that he had ever heard, and then she put her hand beneath his chin, turned his earnest face up to her

own, and told him all the tale of what he had thought he knew so well.

"But his eyes are so black, my mother!" he said, quite unaware that his own wondering orbs were equally black.

She kissed him, smiling, and continued her story.

"But why does he keep thee forever shut up in his dark room when the sun and Röschen and I are all without?" he further demanded.

"Dear child," she made answer, "he can write no music unless I am there, because he loves me and because he knows that I love him. It is because we are so very happy that thy father creates more wonderfully every year — because each moment of our life is so supremely blessed."

"But thou must obey him ever," said Eitel, with a passionate grasping after supporting straws.

The mother laughed.

"Naturally," she cried; "if we all had not to obey him what would become of us? Obedience is very good for Eitel and for his mother as well. And so we shall now return homeward."

"But the path?" he asked, doubtfully.

"I will find the path," she replied, and rose to her feet and took his hand and led him away.

His lips quivered. The downfall of his hopes was very terrible. His mother looked down upon him, and her heart was flooded with a tender sympathy which she had never known before.

"When the father returns," she said, gently, "thou shalt know and love him. We have not guessed how old our son had grown."

He tried to smile, but despair was in his heart.

They came to the path and followed it back to the house. Röschen was on the terrace with Olga. Her brother realized suddenly that the life in the forest had not included her, and a dart of remorse entered his mind.

"I forgot Röschen," he said, looking up in his mother's face.

She understood and smiled.

It was the second morning after.

Madame was taking her coffee, Olga was dressing Röschen for her morning ride on the terrace. Prince Eitel stood by the window. His heart was heavy, for the father had returned. Madame had told him that interesting piece of news just as soon as he had awakened — it had taken away all his appetite for his chocolate and roll.

Olga carried Röschen in and put her down on the floor with her woolly lamb to play there for a minute while the little carriage was being prepared.

"Play thou with her, Eitel," said madame, gently.

Eitel made no reply — his voice was full of choked sensations. He had no feelings, except the overwhelming sorrow that the father had returned.

Madame put down her coffee cup, rose and left the room.

The seconds became minutes; it was very quiet, for Röschen was sucking her woolly lamb; finally, Eitel turned around — in all his life he and his sister had never been left alone like that before! He had been alone occasionally — but both together — never.

Then the door opened quickly, and both children,

looking up, saw their father. He had two large boxes and a package in his hands. It was the first time that he had ever entered their apartment, and the first time that Eitel had ever seen him with anything except the violin in his hands. Decidedly, this was a morning of wonders.

The father said not a word. He went to the table and unrolled the package, and took from the wrappings a large, hairy elephant, which he sat upon the floor by Röschen. The elephant waved its ears and tossed its trunk and moved its eyeballs from side to side. Röschen stopped sucking her lamb and stared at the new toy in tremendous astonishment. Eitel stared too.

The father said not a word. He began to untie the boxes. When they were free of their cords, he took the cover from the upper one, and proceeded to unpack it. It was packed with soldiers! Eitel wanted to remain afar, and stand upon his dignity, but his resolution wavered when he saw the soldiers. He looked at the father, but the father said not a word.

Instead, he went to work to set out the troop of cavalry. They were magnificent, and no one would have supposed that a big man with such an awe-producing mustache would have understood how to line them up so well. Eitel came somewhat nearer. The infantry followed, and then came a complete field battery. The like had never existed before. Eitel approached still closer. The father never noticed him. Röschen was patting the elephant. There was not a sound in the room.

The father put aside the empty box and opened

that which had rested beneath it. It was a breathless moment. And then he lifted out a fort — a complete fort, and placed it behind the soldiers.

There was a short pause. Eitel was beside the table — his eyes were shining — he was speechless.

The father went to where Röschen sat and took her upon his arm.

"Seest thou the elephant, Röschen?" he asked, in a voice that startled Eitel with its gentle sweetness.

"Inside? What?" asked Röschen, trying to fill out her deficient vocabulary by pointing to the new toy.

"The elephant's soul, of course," said the father, laughing.

Eitel looked at him. It appeared that some magic change had been wrought. He felt all his resentment fading most unaccountably. The father sat down in madame's great chair, took Röschen on his knee and held out his other hand to Eitel. And Eitel went and took it, climbed upon the other knee, and never knew fear again.

Madame did not return, nor Olga. But the mother came in after a little, and they all played with the soldiers and the elephant together. The father loaded the cannon and Eitel fired them, and when the soldiers fell dead on the field of battle, the mother clapped Röschen's little hands.

Finally Eitel began to grow weary; although he was so far advanced toward manhood he still was in the habit of sleeping at eleven o'clock each morning. He rubbed his eyes vigorously, but they grew heavier and heavier in spite of himself.

Olga appeared in the door, and the mother rose and gave the baby into her arms. Eitel held up his face to be kissed, to the end that he might go too.

"I love thee, oh, my mother," he said, earnestly.

Then he hesitated; one was towering there behind the mother.

He ran back to him, he put up his two little arms, he felt himself seized and borne upward in the air.

"Oh, Eitel, Prinz Eitel!" said a voice in his ear, and the voice sounded husky.

He put his arms tightly around the head that had such black eyes — such black hair — such a black mustache ——

"I love thee, oh, my father," he whispered, courageously.

And then he was placed on the floor, and ran quickly after Olga and Röschen.

And then the father and mother were alone together.

THE REVERSED LOVE LETTERS

THE words were hardly out of Rudolf's mouth before both he and Angela were delighted with the idea. Each saw what an opportunity it gave to show the other how much better it might be done. Hitherto they had never written any love-letters, because they had never been separated, and also because it was not mutually admitted that they were in love. Every one else knew that they would probably be married within a year, but Rudolf himself had doubts about Angela, and Angela was tremblingly uncertain as to Rudolf. Each knew that the other would render earth heaven, but each doubted whether it was personally possible to give adequate returns. It seems proper just here to sketch in the outlines of Rudolf and Angela before entering upon the weighty subject of the letters.

Rudolf was a big fellow with a small head and fine muscles. He had literally swum through college, and owed all sorts of honors to a strong back and his willingness to go on a diet and under a trainer. Angela, who was weak and wispy, regarded him as a hero — even as more of a hero than he did himself. In private meditations she always pictured him carrying her up-stairs and down-stairs when she was

tired — and blushed at the sweet mutual future presented to her vision.

Angela was fair and flat and nineteen, with large blue eyes and neuralgia. Her ankles bent under her when she walked too far, and she had to give up music on account of the little bone in her wrist. No one knew just what ailed the little bone, and there was a mystery about the whole which made Angela even more interesting than the neuralgia. Any one with any knowledge of human nature can see at a glance that here was the wife for Rudolf, and the first time he saw her he realized that himself. He knew that as soon as they were married he would break up the neuralgia and settle the little bone in her wrist in short order, so he began to call, and the more he called the more in love he fell.

Then came the summons to be best man at the wedding of a friend who lived in another city, and the tender suggestion that, of course, they would write, and Angela's blushing murmur that she knew she could never write anything that would interest *him*, and Rudolf's acknowledgment that he was but a poor letter-writer himself. Then Angela had laughed and said she had no idea what sort of letters a big, clever man would expect from a little, stupid girl, and *then* he had jokingly suggested that each should write the other's letters.

After that the idea went on wheels. Rudolf was quite enthusiastic on the subject, and Angela said that she did not know what kind of letters men wrote, but that she would write the kind *she* would like to get.

"You won't mind if they sound foolish?" she

questioned, crossing the ankle that turned the oftenest over the one that turned only two times out of five.

"Oh, no," said Rudolf, with his cheerful grin, which, when he felt tender, went straight across his whole face; "I shall like to see just what sort of letters girls — I mean, you — like."

So it was agreed; only, as an afterthought, they arranged that they might add postscripts in their own proper characters.

Then Rudolf set forth, and four days later the first letters were exchanged:

Rudolf to Angela (Angela's composition, but copied by Rudolf).

My Dearest Miss Angela: How I have missed you! It was so terrible alone on the train. My eyes kept filling, and I could not eat any luncheon or any dinner. You know men can always eat, so you see how dreadfully lonesome I was. I thought about you all the day and all the night. I never slept a wink. It is terrible to feel so. I have your little handkerchief in my left breast pocket, and when no one was looking I took it out and kissed it. I cannot write more, for my head and heart ache so.

Yours truly, Rudolf.

P. S. (*by* Rudolf): I copied the letter because I said I should, but I really had a very good trip. Potter and Wallsten got on toward nine o'clock, and we played poker all night. They said little Fitgetts had got a degree, and was going down your way. Be nice to him if you meet him. He's a good sort.

Angela to Rudolf (*Rudolf's composition, but copied by Angela*).

DEAR RUDOLF: When I got up this morning I made up my mind to turn over a new leaf. I bought some puttees and bound my legs straight up, and went out and walked five miles. My ankles never turned once, and I feel very fit. I also bought some light-weight dumb-bells, and intend swinging half an hour daily. That will broaden me out and shape me up. Of course I miss you, but if you'll only stay away a week I'll show you a different girl when you get back.

Yours, ANGELA.

P. S. (*by* ANGELA): I copied it because I said I should, but, oh, Rudolf, how can you think I would dream of doing such things! Puttying up my — my —— Oh, it is *too* awful! I never would have believed it of you — never! And as to swinging anything, why, I should burst out all my sleeves. Besides, you forget the little bone in my wrist. I am not sending you another letter to copy, and I shall not send any more. You can write what you please. A Mr. Fitgetts has called, and says he knows you. He is not a bit like you.

Rudolf received this letter just as he was setting off for a ten-mile tramp with Katharine Tenterden, one of the bridesmaids and a champion at basket-ball. He put it in his pocket and forgot all about it till the next day. For that Katharine Tenterden was responsible. She was a fine, red-haired, blooming sort of production, who had been to college and

missed at everything but the ball in basket-ball. Her head was even smaller than Rudolf's, but she knew a way to hold a strand of hair out straight and slide it up fuzzily on itself with a comb to the end that her brains looked about a foot across. After the ten-mile tramp they stopped at a place where she didn't mind going in, and there they got some beer and pretzels and then went back to the house, the long way. Miss Tenterden's ankles never turned once — indeed, she danced until two the next morning, and grew so warm that her red hair appeared pale in contrast to her face.

Meanwhile Angela and Mr. Fitgetts had met a second time and reached a degree of intimacy which led them to discuss Browning. Neither had read Browning, but each supposed, as a matter of course, that the other had.

The next day Rudolf found Angela's letter and read it, but had no time to draft further correspondence. The day after, he received another epistle, but as that was the day of the wedding, of course he could not read it, and the maids threw it into the waste-paper basket while the party was at church. The maids were excusable, for they had to get Rudolf's bed down and out into the carriage-house, so as to serve punch in his room, and the time was limited.

However, it did not much matter, as all the letter said was:

"Why don't you write?"

Angela had pictured Rudolf's eager delight in opening the envelope in the face of her threat to

write no more, and his bitter sorrow at finding only four words therein, after all. But the reader knows how far astray from the true facts her picturings wandered.

The wedding went off most hilariously, and in the general final mix-up Rudolf kissed Katharine, and liked it.

Curiously enough, that very day Mr. Fitgetts kissed Angela—'s hand. After that the end loomed fair — and near.

Angela wrote no more, and Rudolf went home with Miss Tenterden, so as to "meet her family." It may be mentioned that that same week Mr. Fitgetts had his mother come and board where he was boarding, so as to "meet Angela."

In late August Angela and Rudolf wrote again. Angela wrote first.

DEAR RUDOLF: I wish to be the first to tell such an old and dear friend as you of my engagement to Mr. Fitgetts. He is going to be under Doctor Gibbs for awhile, and I suppose that later he will have the church. Doctor Gibbs will marry us, and I do hope that you can be here.

Samuel will write you himself soon.

Yours truly, ANGELA.

Rudolf wrote:

MY DEAR ANGELA: I surely am awfully glad to hear from you. Have been meaning to write, but if you're engaged you know how it is. I am myself, too — to Katharine Tenterden. Awfully jolly girl

— just my sort. Hope you'll wish us joy. I wish you joy with all my heart. Fitgetts is a first-class sort. He never got on any team, on account of his eye-glasses, but he'll suit you to a T.

Do you know this takes a load off my mind? I've wanted to write you about Katharine, but I always sort of felt you might mind, don't you know.

With best wishes,

Yours always, RUDOLF.

It may not surprise the feminine reader to learn that as quick as the mails could go around Rudolf got an answer. It ran as follows, and the writing ran, too — down-hill. A novelist would say that it bore "traces of great agitation."

DEAR RUDOLF: I do congratulate you, but how *could* you suppose that I ever cared about *you?* I'm sure I never thought of such a thing. I showed Samuel your letter, and at first he thought of writing you as man to man, but he says it is nobler to take no notice. He did not want me to write, either, but I just *had* to. The very idea! I hope Miss Tenterden is *very* strong. ANGELA.

THE BRIDE'S PREVISION

AS the carriage drove off with Clara waving her hand and George waving his hat, Mrs. Steele, standing in the forefront of the crowd of guests, waved her handkerchief vigorously. She was very tired, and the black silk which the town fashion decrees unto the mother of even a June bride was very oppressive; but nevertheless her gesticulation was hearty and energetic, for Mrs. Steele was one who never shirked any duty.

The carriage disappeared, and the guests returned into the house. The festivity was practically over; and the bride's mother, as she heard the rattle of wheels coming from the stables, felt her eyes involuntarily marking the rice upon the floor, while her thoughts fluttered toward the carpet-sweeper.

" I do hope you aren't too tired," Arabella Popp cried, running up just then to say good-by. " Oh, dear Mrs. Steele, do promise me that just as soon as we're gone you'll lie down — will you? "

" Well, I don't know," said Mrs. Steele, smiling. " There'll be a good deal to do first, I fancy."

" Oh, but don't do it," said Arabella Popp; " just leave it. I promised Clara that I'd tell you that her last wish was that you should just leave everything."

"Well, I'll certainly try to carry out Clara's last wish, now that she's gone," said Mrs. Steele, good-humoredly. She was not only good-humored, but also sensible; and had, besides, a sense of humor.

"I do wish I could stay with you," continued Arabella Popp. "Clara was so afraid that you would be lonely."

"Oh," said Mrs. Steele, with a sudden sense of alarm, "I am never lonely. Pray — pray believe me."

"You dear, brave thing," cried Arabella Popp, catching her around the neck; "you sweet, courageous creature, you! Well, I shall run in to-morrow, anyhow."

"Pray don't trouble over me," said Mrs. Steele, readjusting that portion of the wedding decorations which encircled her own throat. She never had liked Arabella Popp; and now she liked her less than ever. But she still smiled.

"So awfully so'y to say goo'-by, don't you know" — it was George's chum, Harold Henbane, now — "so awfully, awfully so'y to say goo'-by." As Harold Henbane had his hand out, Mrs. Steele had no choice but to put hers into it. "So awfully so'y to have to" — Harold Henbane hesitated, then suddenly remembered — "oh, to be sure — to say goo'-by, don't you know."

Well, Clara had had a nice wedding, and every one had had all the turbot, punch, and — champagne that they could ask, eat (and drink). Mrs. Steele wasn't going to regret anything now — not even while Harold Henbane was working her arm slowly and automatically up and down. He stared

fixedly over her head at an oil-portrait of Clara's grandmother's third husband.

"So awfully so'y to say goo'-by," said Harold Henbane meditatively.

"I'm sure it's very good of you," said Mrs. Steele, struggling to free herself.

"Oh, but it isn't," said Harold Henbane; "fact is, I promised — what the devil did I promise? Oh, yes — fact is, I promised George to tell you I'd stay all night to-night to keep you from being lonesome — an' I will, too — I will — fact is, I'd like to."

"Oh, no *indeed*," cried Mrs. Steele, with great emphasis. "I can't let you — indeed I can't. You mustn't think of it."

Harold Henbane looked alarmed. "Mustn't I?" he said, in great confusion. "I wasn't thinking of it. Really, I wasn't. I hope you'll believe me when I give you my word. I hope you'll overlook it."

"Why, of course," said Mrs. Steele.

"Will you really, now?"

"Yes, yes."

"You aren't fooling me — are you?"

"No, no."

The tears suddenly flooded Harold Henbane's eyes.

"So awfully so'y to say goo'-by," he said sadly, loosed her hand, and departed.

"Oh, Drusilla, I can't — I really *cannot* leave you like this" — it was Mrs. Kent, an old, old friend. "I tell Crawford" — Crawford was Mr. Kent — "I tell Crawford he can just trot on home alone, and I'll stay here. You'll be lonesome."

"Oh, no," cried Mrs. Steele, "I won't consent to your thinking of staying with me, Harriett; indeed I won't."

"That's so like you, Drusilla; always trying to think of others. But I know you, and I know how your heart is breaking, and I'm not going to leave you alone here; no, I'm not." Mrs. Kent was holding both of Mrs. Steele's hands, and jumping mildly about in the fervor of her friendship. Mrs. Kent was totally unaccustomed to champagne and had no idea what she was jumping about for; or, indeed, that she was jumping about at all.

"But, Harriett, I shall not be lonesome — I do assure you."

"Don't tell *me*," cried Mrs. Kent, her voice and her antics on the increase; "don't tell me, Drusilla. I know how strong you are; I see how weak you are; I know the struggle you're struggling; I know the ache you're aching; I know ——"

"Harriett," said Mrs. Steele firmly, "you are talking foolishly. Go straight home to bed."

"Oh, dear, I believe I ought to," cried Mrs. Kent. "I feel so queerly, Drusilla; I never felt so before. I'm happy, and yet I want to cry, too — and somehow my legs do twitch so with nervousness. A wedding is so trying, I ——"

"Yes, I know," said Mrs. Steele, with great force of purpose. "Now go, Harriett."

"But I shall come to-morrow," exclaimed Mrs. Kent; "I shall come to-morrow. Oh, Drusilla, say I may come to-morrow? Because if you don't say that I can come to-morrow, I shall stay to-night."

"Go now — that's all," said Mrs. Steele; and as

she spoke the words she leveled upon her friend the sort of gaze that the lion-tamer keeps for the lion alone.

So Mrs. Kent went. And one by one, or two by two, or a carriage-load at a time, they all went finally. It took patience, for the idea that Mrs. Steele would be lonesome was very prevalent — astonishingly prevalent, in fact. Still, they all *did* go finally.

As soon as the house was empty except for herself and her household, the bereaved parent divested herself of the stiff and binding black silk dress, summoned the servants about her, called for brooms and dust-pans, and began forthwith to set the house of mirth once more in order. It was very nearly nine o'clock when they were through, for the work dragged considerably, not only on account of the relaxation natural after a day of great doings, but also because there was a good deal of furniture to be moved, and no end of reboxing to be accomplished before the temporary trustee of the wedding-presents could repose in perfect peace. George's uncle — the one who provoked expectations on the part of every one in the family — had dowered the happy couple with a clock, which could under no circumstances be left in a damp atmosphere. There is always the chance of rain, so that Mrs. Steele dared not risk the clock on the back piazza all night; in consequence, she, the gardener, the hammer, and the ice-pick formed a merry and able quartet until about half-past eight; then the gardener dropped the hammer on his foot; from that time on the coachman had to finish the job.

Betweenwhiles, the telephone rang constantly. Arabella Popp and other thoughtful friends entreating Mrs. Steele to bear up and remember Clara was only gone for a fortnight, and that George was the best of men. At about quarter to nine, just as her mother had gone down cellar to sequestrate what was left of the champagne, Clara herself called up over the long-distance, to say that it hadn't been a bit dusty; that they were just taking the train, and that George was the dearest, dearest, dearest of men. She choked toward the last, and begged Mrs. Steele to remember that Clara loved her mother just the same as ever. Mrs. Steele, who was making up her mind that she really must have the wall phone altered to the kind where you sit down, blessed her, and told her not to risk missing the train by talking any longer. "George wants to say just one word," said Clara. Mrs. Steele waited for George's communication, but it was very short, consisting of the two brief words: "Mother, my ——" and then a violent sneeze.

The caterer meanwhile had come to remove everything hired for the occasion. He and the cook disagreed violently as to a decorative center ornament which graced the mantel in the dining-room. Mrs. Steele went out there to calm them. As she was talking with the belligerents, the telephone rang again. The minister had left his gold-rimmed glasses somewhere up-stairs; he *thought* in the bath-room, where he remembered taking them off to wash his hands. He said that he had hesitated to disturb Mrs. Steele, but on second thoughts had decided that a little effort might help her to rally her stunned forces after the blow of the day.

As soon as the minister hung up, Mrs. Kent got the line to say that she believed, after all, she would come out for the night if the Steele horses could drive a carriage in for her. Mrs. Kent added that she really could not see now why she had not remained when she was out there. She said that she had had within her a strong feeling of duty to stay, but she had mistaken it for wedding-cake until after she got back to her own house. While Mrs. Steele was conversing with Mrs. Kent, and feeling more than ever how very necessary a sit-down telephone was to the sum of human happiness, the caterer fell from a step-ladder in the library, and came so near breaking his leg that nobody knew that he hadn't done it until a doctor was hurried there to say so.

It was fully eleven o'clock before the house was quiet after that episode. Mrs. Steele began to think that bed was never to be hers again on earth. She was "awfully" tired; she really ached all over. In her prayers she thanked God that Clara was an only child, and that her wedding was accomplished for all time. She fell asleep without any delay. It seemed only a few minutes later when she was awakened by the violent ringing of the front door bell — in fact, by a thumb so steadily applied that the clangor echoed through the whole house.

She went to the window at once, and looked out into the fabled calm of a country place.

"Who's there?" she cried loudly.

"Telegram," came a voice from below. Of course she had to clutch her kimono and slippers and go down-stairs, receive the missive, and sign for it.

Then she read it; it was from Clara.

Am thinking of you. Don't be lonesome.
Ever yours with love, CLARA.

Just twelve words!

Mrs. Steele went back to bed. She felt a hundred times more tired than before; every bone in her body seemed to be singing with fatigue. Fortunately she wasn't long in getting to sleep again. Neither was she long in being wakened again. It was the same bell as before.

Horrors! Had she *got* to get up again?

"Who is it?" she screamed from the window, as soon as the ordeal of getting out of the comfortable bed had been accomplished.

"*Tel*-ygram," came the voice from below, in the dark.

This time, while going down-stairs, she slipped on a June bug that had managed to get into the house while the wedding-guests were getting out of the house. When one is prowling about alone in the dark, slipping on anything is most disagreeable.

The telegram was from George on this occasion. Still shaken from the wrench which she owed to the June bug, Mrs. Steele paused by the newel-post to read this:

Clara bright and cheerful. Trust in me, and don't be lonesome. GEORGE.

Just twelve words!

She climbed up-stairs again, and pitched herself upon the bed. Then she slept.

It took an unusual din to arouse her the third

time. The bell seemed to have been ringing hours before it succeeded in waking her at last.

She was dizzy with sleep. She sat up and thought at first that to make a further exertion would be a physical impossibility. But where there's a will there's a way. On her way to the window she collided with furniture entirely off the main route, for her staggering limbs almost refused to support her; but she accomplished her purpose in the end.

"What is it?" she cried tartly, out into the hush and charm of the night.

"Itsch a chellygram, mum," came the reply.

"Take it back to the office and tell them not to send any more out to-night, do you hear-r-r?" she commanded wrathfully.

"Doanchewwantoreadit-t-t?" the boy yelled back.

"No, I don't."

With a mumble of astonishment at her lack of curiosity, he went crunching away over the gravel. Mrs. Steele returned to bed and tried to sleep once more; but this time it was no longer possible. She was too outraged and too nervous. Besides, she found that, after awhile, she heard queer sounds; stealthy footsteps without; and then one of the porch seats was roughly jarred. She sprang to the window and listened sharply! Yes, there *was* some one below; she could hear him distinctly. Oh, that wedding silver! What a prize for burglars!

She listened intently. The man was going around to the back of the house. She slipped to a side window, and heard the soft pad of his feet on a flower-bed. Horrors! what was to be done? Suddenly,

leaning against a window-screen for support, she called out: "Speak, or I fire!" a well-worn but usually effective phrase.

A slight cry sounded from below, then:

"Oh, for God's sake don't, mum!" said a man's voice.

"Who are you?"

"I'm a watchman, mum."

"Who sent you here?"

"Your son-in-law, mum; so you'd be safe to-night whatever come."

Mrs. Steele recoiled abruptly from the window. She wondered why she had not adhered to her first presentiment of *not* wanting George to marry Clara. "I should have been asleep now if I had persevered in my opinion," she moaned bitterly to herself.

But it was of no use to consider such futilities now. George had probably meant the watchman kindly. At any rate, she must bear all in patience. So she returned to the window.

"Try not to walk on the gravel, as that would wake me up again," she called out as mildly as she was able to call out.

"Yes, mum; I sympathize with ye, mum. I've had a daughter married mesilf, mum. 'Tis the first as is hardest, mum."

She went back to bed. Still impossible to sleep. The dawn was forever in coming. When it came, it was a rainy dawn. Mrs. Steele *did* fall asleep at about seven. At seven-thirty, Mrs. Kent telephoned to know if she should come at eight. The maid woke Mrs. Steele to know her answer; but Mrs. Kent had hung up before the maid returned. The result was

that Mrs. Kent arrived at about eight. Arabella Popp came at nine with her aunt and her knitting. It seemed that Arabella had promised Clara to do this the day before.

"I never break my word, not even if it rains," said Arabella Popp.

Mrs. Steele said "so she saw."

At nine-thirty Clara herself called up on the long-distance again.

"Dearest mama," she said, "George is shaving; we have a telephone right in the room, so I can talk with you whenever I want to. I am talking over it now."

"Drusilla," said Mrs. Kent, who was very much in a day-after-the-party mood, "tell the dear child we are trying our best to distract you."

Mrs. Steele at that turned resolutely upon the telephone.

"Clara," she said, with cruel distinctness, "I never slept last night; every one is kindness itself; every effort is being made to distract me; and I may remark that I am already half-distracted."

"Are you lonesome?" Clara asked tenderly.

"No — only sleepy," replied her mother.

"Oh, mama, you are always so droll! But don't this carry you back to your own early wedded days?"

"I hadn't thought of it," said Mrs. Steele; "but then you know I've often told you that my honeymoon was the only thing that your papa gave me for a wedding-present; so George and his sunburst could hardly recall him to me."

"Oh, George is too sweet!" said the bride; "he is beginning to shave the other side now."

"Well, I send him my best wishes," said the mother-in-law.

"He wants me," said the bride. "Good-by, dearest mama."

"Good-by."

When Mrs. Steele turned from the telephone Arabella Popp was rolling up her knitting.

"Do you know, I believe auntie and I will go home," she said, looking quite red.

"And I'm going, too, Drusilla," said Mrs. Kent, looking quite white. "Now don't say a word, because I'm surely going."

"I'm not saying a word," said Mrs. Steele. And they went.

As soon as she was alone, she unhung the receiver of the telephone and left it dangling. Then she told the servants to say to callers that she had departed for the Rockies. Mounting to her chamber, she proceeded to go to bed.

"I'll remember one thing when Clara's eldest daughter gets married," she said. "I'll tell my granddaughter to leave Clara in peace; to be lonesome or be anything else she likes."

Then she went soundly to sleep.

Five minutes after, the maid aroused her with another telegram. She was exasperated, but she sat up calmly and read:

Dearest Mama, just getting into the buggy. Don't be lonesome for — Clara.

Just twelve words!

She stared at it. Then she saw that this should

have preceded all the rest. She hardly knew whether to laugh or cry.

"Is the boy gone, Amelia?" she asked.

"No, ma'am."

"Give me a pencil, please — I want to write a message."

The maid obeyed.

And Mrs. Steele wrote:

Dear George and Clara, I am not at all lonesome. Believe me.

Just twelve words!

"Take that to the boy," she said.

GASPARD AND HIS WAX LADY

THERE was once upon a time in a small French town a particularly small *friseur* of the name of Gaspard. A *friseur* is a hair-dresser, and Gaspard was a hair-dresser by inheritance and by inclination: by inheritance, because his six elder brothers had preferred to go to the Colonies rather than to remain at home and *friser* for the support of their aged parents; by inclination, because all who had ever come in contact with his work were forced to admit that he was a true artist.

I have said that Gaspard was small; but I must qualify the statement by stating that he had a good heart. He was so small that he respected and looked up to individuals five feet nothing; but his heart was the best in the world, and really was the only thing that stood in his way as to worldly advancement; for if it had not been for that good heart he could have bought himself a wax lady, and might then have snapped his fingers in Alphonse's face several years before — but I am getting ahead of my tale.

Alphonse was the rival *friseur*. It is a bitter fate that gives even a *friseur* a rival. It would have seemed to the casual observer that Gaspard was sufficiently handicapped by his good heart, without having Alphonse thrown in for good measure. But

Alphonse (who was doubly barbed by being especially tall) moved into the town three weeks after Gaspard superseded his father, and he remained there until events of which you shall soon learn removed him out of our dear little friend's path. The rivalry was sharp and cruel, and as Alphonse's cleverness lay chiefly in adaptation, and as he had from the first a wax lady to adapt them on, it will be readily comprehended that Gaspard suffered sadly in the way of business competition.

It is difficult to so arrange a wig on a pasteboard cone that it will produce the same effect on those who look in windows as the same arrangement on a wax lady. The most beautifully rolled curl hanging loose will never cause an outsider the same emotion as when it lies carelessly over a creamy wax shoulder. And he who tells me that any front view is feasible with a pasteboard cone tells me something which causes me to deeply doubt the soundness of his intellect.

Of course Gaspard realized all these facts keenly; of course he was half-mad in his desire, nay, in his absolute need, of a wax lady; but waxen ladies cost money, and our hero never seemed able to save any. An old mother with false teeth, an old father with a tendency to palpitations of the heart in those hours that a doctor charges double, and an old shop that first caves in and then leaks overhead — these were the first reasons why Gaspard could not save. But a tendency to buy cakes for wistful-eyed children, to give pennies to uninvestigated beggars, and to invent new coiffures for poor but pretty girls, these were also reasons and good reasons for poverty, and

to these further accusations he was also forced to plead guilty.

It was a Sisyphus task to support a good heart and a rival with a wax lady at the same time, but poor Gaspard seemed doomed to nothing better, try as he might to better himself. There was a day when he had perfected his truly remarkable coiffure of the ten separate curls drawn up on top with a ribbon — that coiffure to which he gave the name "*la princesse imprisonnée*," and which he fondly hoped might carry his name far out into the universe — that day his heart fairly sang with hope. But the next day Alphonse his rival adapted "*la princesse imprisonnée*," constructing it with eight curls and their ends tied in a bow-knot, named it "*la reine librée*," and exhibited the whole on his wax lady. Heavens! what a blow!

I am not going to harrow your soul by giving the details of Gaspard's life for all those first years. He kept having his mother's teeth repaired and his father's heart regulated, and a board laid here and a shingle nailed there in the shop, until it seemed to him that life was all a delusion. Naturally, if he could have had a wax lady he could have found comfort in displaying his art on her artificiality; but as it was he needed only to give forth an idea over his pasteboard cone, and Alphonse stole it at once and embellished his model with it. I tell you it was crazing, and Gaspard would often have gnashed his teeth, only he was scared to death of any more dentist's bills. He could not help designing coiffures; for he had the nature of a genius in hair, and everything he saw or heard inspired him to a new manage-

ment of that matter; but the want of a wax lady fell never so keenly over him, and nothing in the world but his good heart kept him from becoming a cynic.

He tried to buy the necessary article on the instalment plan; but when he was one franc short of the first payment his mother died, and he had to go sixty francs in debt for her funeral. It took eight months to pay off the sixty francs, and then, just as he was about to reopen negotiations, his father was taken ill with his liver, and finally died of that — an action that would have greatly exasperated any son but Gaspard, when you consider those years and years of doctoring for his heart.

But now at least our hero was free, and he told himself that when the second undertaking bill was settled there would be a wax lady in his window at last and people should then have a chance to see what he was capable of doing.

About this time a rich widow came to live in the town, and as she required to be "waved" daily, Gaspard felt that perhaps his luck had turned at last. I do not mean by that that he entertained any mercenary ideas regarding her widowhood — I only mean that he regarded her as a source of steady income. She was fat and unattractive, and so large that he had to stand on a footstool to do her summit properly; but she was so faithful and such good pay that by October he was out of debt and ready to begin to lay by for the cherished ambition's purchase. By Christmas he had again saved almost enough for the first instalment, and he was so happy that he made the rich widow a holiday compliment by naming his newest conceit — a roll of braids wind-

ing neatly to a peak wherever a peak was most becoming — "*la pyramid à la veuve.*" But alas! the effect of this feat was entirely other than anticipated.

Alphonse stole the idea as usual and crowned the peak with a little bunch of trickling ringlets. He put the whole on top of his model, christened it "*le charme de la veuve,*" and poor Gaspard lost his best client at once as a consequence. Two days later his one chimney fell in, and the future looked dark indeed. When the chimney was rebuilt all the instalment money was gone, and Madam the Wax Lady was again as a mirage in the desert. Sad, was it not? Gaspard had no doubt as to the adjective. He wondered if a cocoanut would not perhaps be better than a paper cone, bought one and tried it. Oh, Heavens! only for his good heart he would have committed suicide.

It was April, a wet day. The little *friseur* was setting his window in order. His kindly nature showed itself in his earnest endeavor to combine bottles, pins, and switches in a manner calculated to give the passer-by a pleasant sensation rather than a shiver. He shook out the fringes of the curls and laid them artistically about, brushed every toupee till it shone, and placed a rhinestone star on the apex of the paper cone. While he was pinning the star firmly in place (for it looked like rain, and when it thundered his shop nearly fell to pieces), a shadow darkened the glass. He looked up and saw a pale, thin young girl leaning against the window. She was not pressing close from curiosity — he knew enough about women to know that she was fainting. The next second she had done it and lay across his doorstep.

He ran out and brought her into the shop — a hard task, for she was tall and he was short. He managed to get her on the hard little sofa and to gather up her trailing members and get them on to the sofa too, and then he held camphor to her nose and splashed water over her freely until she came to and opened her large dark eyes and looked at him.

"I am starving," she said then. And he hurried and heated some broth and brought it to her and fed her as tenderly as if she had been a baby.

"I am cold," she said when she had eaten, and at that he straightway helped her to the little room which his parents had occupied and lit a fire in the tiny fireplace, and leaving her to rest ran to the neighbor who had sometimes ministered to his mother and brought her to the succor of the poor girl.

It was only then, when he had done all that the dictates of his good heart had commanded, that Gaspard began to reflect on the white, white skin, and thick black hair of her whom he had taken in.

But it was true about her skin and true about her hair, and in two days' time the pink came to her cheeks and the red to her lips, and with a wondrous bound, overpowering all the goodness in his heart, Gaspard saw that he had had a model given him which would send Alphonse, his waxwork, and his rich widow clear into the shade. He begged permission to do her hair at once, and made a gorgeous wall of it above her brow, having an outwork of cunningly looped braids; then he sat her in his window and rubbed his hands with joy, and before an hour half the town had walked by and one woman who had no hair to speak of had come in, purchased a fine switch

and requested that "*la couronne d'ange*" (the new coiffure) be forthwith placed over her.

That was the real turning-point in Gaspard's career. He seized his opportunity with avidity, and Dinette, his visitor, bloomed forth in a new head-dress daily. He arranged for her to live with his old neighbor, and taught her to curl mustaches. The business boomed at once. Every man raised a mustache, and every woman bought a switch. When the whole town was switched, Gaspard banged Dinette's hair and curled the fringe. Then the whole town bought curls. It all shows what a tremendous amount of business talent may be hidden behind a good heart. Gaspard waxed rich, and Alphonse waxed poor. In August when one may properly go somewhat décolletté in the day-time, Dinette completely outshone the wax lady. Her curls laid around her neck with such careless and delightful abandon that Gaspard took the agency for a flesh-food and sold dozens of boxes weekly. Finally Alphonse gave up in despair and married the rich widow, who had been madly jealous of his wax lady for months.

That was a great day for Gaspard. He became the only *friseur* in the town, and the joy in his heart was such that he asked Dinette to become his wife. Dinette took a day to think it over, and then she accepted. They were quietly married in a chapel back of the altar; for she was nearly ten inches the taller, and although grateful for being saved from starvation, still would naturally have preferred to take a man of her size. Gaspard invented her bridal coiffure. He had a dove made of wire, and wove her hair in and out of it so skilfully that I have heard on

good authority that the first nineteen hours of their wedded life were spent in endeavoring to get the dove out of her head again.

It was a fortnight later that Gaspard reaped the triumph of his life. It came about in this way. One lovely morning Dinette was giving a final twist to the ends of the first lieutenant's mustache, while three other men sat side by side on the hard sofa and waited their turn. Gaspard himself was standing on his footstool while he "waved" the new front of the leading baker's wife, a woman who had never had even so much as a shampoo before the coming of Dinette. Just then Michel the assistant (oh yes! of late they had been absolutely forced to employ an assistant) came in from where he had been washing the sidewalk and said that a gentleman awaited *monsieur* outside in his wagon. If Gaspard had guessed that it was Alphonse he would perhaps have enjoyed keeping him waiting awhile; but as he did not know who it was he told the baker's wife that she could do the waiting, and flew out of the door at once.

He was not overjoyed when he saw that it was his former rival; but when he learned his rival's errand his good heart succumbed at last; for Alphonse absolutely desired to sell him his own old wax lady, that object that had embittered his every hour for years and years and years.

Gaspard drew himself up. His head came level with the top of Alphonse's wheel, but he felt himself a giant.

"*Sacré bleu!*" he said (he never used bad language himself but he had accidentally cut enough men while shaving them to have had this expression

impressed upon his mind) — "*sacré bleu!* Alphonse! And do you for one moment — for one second — think? *Mon dieu!* Do I live? Do I hear? A wax lady! — a thing of wax! And she to me — to me — to me, who am the husband of the most beautiful wax lady who has ever lived! Look only through my window! But behold her! And you offer me of wax! Go, I bid you, go! Provoke me not further! I am but human! Go!"

He paused and panted. His utterance choked for a second. All his stolen masterpieces, all his patient efforts toward one end, only to see it everlastingly deferred, came rushing upward in one geyser of deadly hate. The longing for revenge overcame him. The barriers of resistance were swept away by its resistlessness. He paused, drew one single long deep breath, and then, "Alphonse!" he hissed, snapped his fingers in the other's face, and turned and entered the shop.

Alphonse became white; but was powerless to defend himself against the accusation, so he drove away.

"I called him Alphonse to his face," said Gaspard to all his hearers who stood within, as he picked up the curling tongs and mounted his footstool again.

A thrill of awe and admiration ran around the room. Dinette looked proudly at her husband, whose chest was expanding visibly as he prepared a fresh attack upon the baker's wife. Dinette's hair was wonderfully done in a bunch over each ear, a rose sticking out of each bunch — this coiffure had been named "*Chérie ma rose*" by its designer, and became its wearer immensely.

(Oh, by the way, it is a deadly insult to call any man "Alphonse" in France. "Alphonse" is the cognomen in popular parlance for one who allows his wife to support him. This little explanation appears to me to be a fitting and proper climax to my tale.)

HER HUSBAND

JERRY was a big, splendid fellow — so big that he had a right to be splendid, and so splendid that he couldn't help knowing it. Perhaps he knew it a bit too well, but, then, most men in his situation are bound to do that.

Anyway, he was fond of trout-fishing, and, being fond of trout-fishing, was naturally attracted to the brand-new resort which advertised square miles of virgin forests with sport for the multitude. Siddons had been there and said it was all true and that Jerry would be in Paradise. Jerry, with the hotel's folder in his vest pocket, was easily persuaded to believe his friend's statement, and took the Saturday's train. Siddons followed him on Sunday. "She" arrived the Tuesday after!

The reason why I went into the above details was so that you might clearly understand that this was a very new place. The peculiar thing about a new place is that the people who go there are generally as new as the place. No one has ever heard of anyone else, and so it was but natural that Siddons and Jerry, who were not new and would never have dreamed of coming except for the trout, should never before have heard of "her."

"She" arrived in a peacock blue broadcloth

travelling-dress, the cut and style of which was so perfect that everyone forgave and forgot the color. She brought with her a maid and sixteen trunks. There are no better social vouchers (in a new place) than a maid and sixteen trunks, so she was accepted with open arms, and Siddons introduced her to Jerry, and Jerry — who had nothing half-hearted about him — fell madly in love with her at once.

Being madly in love leads naturally to close acquaintance, and by Friday the necessity for time to know her better yet led to Siddons being obliged to fish alone.

Matters went on so fast that at the end of the week (that is to say, on Saturday night) Jerry felt that he knew her through and through; then Sunday came, and Monday, and their passing carried him so much farther ahead that when he had known her a week he was acutely conscious of the fact that he didn't know her at all. When this fact dawned upon him he ceased to be madly in love, reformed completely, went way back, and began all over at the beginning.

He did this because she piqued his curiosity and interested him beyond the point to which any other had ever led or driven his buoyant conceit. He felt that she was well worth some extra trouble, and felt, also, that he was more than willing to undertake the work necessary to her winning. The peacock broadcloth gown did not seem to fit into her general make-up at all — she certainly had more to her than that particular color would ever have led anyone to expect. She was beyond a shadow of a doubt an especially curious bit of bewitching womanhood, and

he felt his newer and deeper interest developing almost as rapidly and strongly as the first and commoner phase of his susceptibility was accustomed to doing.

Siddons fished, and his friend walked and talked with "her." It was all very delightful until, just as the fortnight was closing in, she suddenly referred to an expected arrival upon the morrow.

"I sha'n't be alone any more," she told him, looking straight up in his face and smiling, "and you can come and call on me in my own parlor. That'll be so much nicer. I'm always glad when my husband's with me and I can ask my friends to my own rooms."

He ran the cord of his monocle up and down through his fingers. Well, what of it? Of course he must have known that she must have had a husband. All women naturally had husbands. It didn't make any difference to him anyhow, because he was only fooling a little. He never for a moment had thought of being in earnest.

"I'll be especially glad to have *you* alone in my own parlor," she continued in a tone that sounded more serious than any which he had ever heard from her before, "because I want to say something very important indeed to you; it's something that I want to ask you about, and it's a subject which one would never think of trying to discuss in public."

He looked at her in some surprise, but she never noticed the look and continued:

"I expect that my husband will arrive about noon to-morrow. Won't you come in at five o'clock and meet him and let me give you a cup of tea?"

He saw no reason why he should refuse to meet her husband or drink her tea, so he accepted the invitation to do both, and the next day, having gone fishing to please and pacify Siddons, he hurried home extremely early so that he might please and pacify his own contradictory inclinations.

Her suite was on the third floor and gave upon the forest. It was one of those which include two towers and a balcony. The tea-table was spread upon the balcony, and some lazy East Indian chairs and rugs and cushions kept it company there. He observed all this during the half minute that he waited in the small reception-room. Then she came in — and her husband.

The caller received rather a startling shock when his eyes met those of the husband.

For the husband was a giant, and his eyes were simply electrifying in their piercingly quick and intent glance. He was very handsome, and the handclasp which followed the introduction was most cordial — almost too cordial, in fact, for it was of that species which preclude all sensation until ten minutes after.

They passed out upon the balcony at once, and she poured the tea, chattering gaily, almost nervously, as she did so. Her husband sat at her side in silence, looking sometimes at her, sometimes at Jerry, and sometimes at the forest; he did not appear particularly interested in what she was saying, but his expression was more placid than bored.

After the tea-drinking was completed a maid came out and removed the tray. Then her husband placed his chair so that he could rest his feet upon

the balustrade and offered Jerry his cigar-case. Thereupon the latter helped himself to a cigar and soon discovered that it was by long odds the best that he had ever knocked over the head with his cigar-cutter.

She had been laughing and talking every minute up to now, but now, when the two cigars were well alight, she suddenly grew quite grave, leaned her elbows upon the table, rested her chin upon her crossed hands, glanced at her husband, and addressed the visitor thus:

"You won't mind my being very serious indeed now — will you? — because — as I said before — I have something very serious that I want to talk to you about — and I never could talk to you alone until my husband came."

Jerry felt his fingers seeking the cord of his monocle in a species of qualm over the extreme earnestness of her address, but before there was any such a pause as demanded filling by him she went on:

"You don't know how dreadfully I've wanted to be alone with you ever since I first met you. It's so crazing to have things to say that you can't say unless you're positive that you won't be interrupted — and you know, although we've been together all day long, still we've never been really like this before."

Jerry felt horribly uncomfortable and didn't know what to say, so looked at his patent-leather toes and shook his head. He didn't know just why he shook his head, but it seemed the only safe thing to dare just then.

"What I want to talk about," she went on, "is

the feeling that men like you and women like me have for one another. I know that you are just as attractive to women as I am to men, and I want to know whether the basis of that attraction is the same with you as it is with me."

She paused; her husband was looking at the forest; Jerry was grasping the cord of his monocle with a strength that he could feel in the back of his neck. Within his heart he felt that the peacock blue hadn't been so far wrong after all.

"Do you think you get my meaning?" she asked after a moment.

"I don't think that I do," he answered bluntly.

She laughed softly.

"Yes, you do, too. It's a species of vanity — now, isn't it? We're naturally attractive and we know it, and we want everyone else to know it too — don't we? You wanted me to like you the first instant that you saw me — didn't you? Why won't you own up?"

Her husband was looking at her now: he was so large that the back of his chair was tipped against the wall and his legs bridged the width of the balcony. Jerry, big as he was, was a pigmy beside him. He wished like thunder that he was off fishing.

"I can't at all admit any of that," he asserted.

"What nonsense! But if you won't admit it, it's true, none the less. But we'll go on a step further. Grant the mutual attractiveness, and let's see how far beyond that the similitude extends. When you met me and were attracted by me did you recognize the fact right off, or did it dawn upon you gradually? I saw that you were épris at once. You see *I'm* honest."

Her husband was shaking the ash from his cigar, and as he did so his eyes encountered Jerry's. The latter was beginning to feel decidedly ill.

"I don't know that I thought anything about it," he said miserably.

"You don't expect me to believe that, do you?" she asked, half smiling, "not after the way that you acted that first evening! Don't you know that I saw that you were wild about me from the first instant. A woman always knows. And what I want to know is — does a man know too? Or does the woman hide her heart better? Did you know that I was specially interested in you before I told you so?"

Upon this Jerry nearly fell out of his chair; his start of astonishment was so unfeigned that her husband started too, leading him to believe for one brief quarter of a second that his last hour was surely at hand.

But she did not appear to notice either action.

"Do answer?" she pleaded.

"You should have been a lawyer," he said, trying to breathe regularly.

"Oh, *dear!*" she cried petulantly, "that's what they all say. Every time that a man falls in love with me I try to get him to tell me the true inwardness of the masculine side — and he *never* will!"

She paused for an instant and then hurried on:

"Just answer me one question, please! After a man knows that a woman is interested in him, is she just as interesting to him as she was before he was sure of her regard? Do you want to be with me just as badly now as you did at first? Do tell me that."

She looked at him, waiting.

Her husband threw away his cigar, folded his arms, and — waited too.

Jerry felt his shirt-collar melting (it wasn't a warm day either). He threaded the cord to his monocle up and down through his fingers, re-crossed his legs, and coughed.

"Really," he said at last, — "really, you must believe me when I say that this is the first time that I ever posed as a psychological problem, and I don't at all know how to play the part."

She looked disappointed.

"You won't own up," she said, shaking her head; "well, I've never yet found the man that would. They're all alike, — men are, — and my husband is the only exception to the lot."

She rose as she spoke and, passing behind her husband, threw her arms about his neck and kissed him.

"Oughtn't you to go now?" she asked, looking over his head at the stunned, benumbed, and paralyzed caller — "it's quite quarter of six, and we've all to dress before dinner."

Jerry arose with the promptitude of a steel spring just loosed in its coiling.

"I'm sorry not to have given satisfaction," he said, "but — really ——"

She extended her hand.

"I don't bear you any ill-will," she said, smiling.

Her husband quitted his seat and gave the visitor another heart-crushing, muscle-rending hand-clasp.

Then at last Jerry got out into the corridor and breathed again.

Siddons found him packing when he came in to dinner.

"Going?" he asked in astonishment.

"Business telegram," Jerry explained briefly, throwing his tooth-brush in on top and banging the cover down.

"Then you didn't get to the tea-party?"

"Yes, I did, too."

"Was her husband there?"

"Oh, yes, her husband was there."

"Horrible about him, isn't it?"

"What?" Jerry asked, turning sharply.

"Didn't you know that he's deaf and dumb?"

JANE AND HER GENIUS

JANE wrote!

And that was not all. Jane had things accepted. The next step beyond getting things accepted is getting one's self conceited, and Jane got that, too.

By the time that she had had five manuscripts printed, and had deposited four of the cheques in the bank and bought a silk umbrella with the fifth, our heroine was housing her vivid imagination upon a private steam yacht and wintering long-dreamed-of Russian sables within a castle in Spain.

It was odd — under such circumstances — that she should have felt that there was anything left for her to learn, but the fact that, although five manuscripts had been accepted, fifty-two others were still returning to her with a regularity as touching as it was faithful, *did* impress her with a slight feeling of uneasiness, and she decided that, upon her next visit to the city, she would call upon an editor and offer herself a sacrifice upon the altar of wisdom.

To that end she wrote and asked a literary friend *what* editor, and the literary friend (who was young) procured her the promise of a personal interview with an editorial friend of his (who was young, too).

Under these circumstances Jane came to town (to

visit her aunt) and, taking a cab, went next to visit the editor.

Although she came by appointment, she found the gentleman out by disappointment. So she had to wait. As she was naturally impatient, she found the waiting most trying to her nerves, and when she tried to beguile the weary hour by looking from the fifteenth floor window, the rural side of her nature turned deathly seasick and she found her situation worse than ever.

So she sat down at his desk, rested her elbows thereupon and prepared to ——

Just then the editor came in! He was a very good-looking and pleasant-smiling gentleman of three or four and thirty, and there was so little difference (outwardly) between himself and other men of the same age and looks that Jane gasped in surprise and started to her feet in the same key.

"Oh, *pray* be seated," he said politely.

So she sat down again and he drew up a chair and sat down, too.

They looked at each other and both wondered how and where to begin. And then they did begin and kept it up for a long time. Jane expressed her great desire to know more, and as her face looked earnest and the editor was conscious of being the possessor of considerable good advice, he just opened the sluice-gates and poured forth instructive hints until she was saturated — not to say drowned — in liquefied knowledge.

The result was fierce. Jane's bosom heaved when the editor paused for breath — she thought that she was going to cry — but she didn't.

Instead, she rallied her failing forces and returned to a species of Balaklavan finalities.

"Tell me, please," she asked, "I want to know about my own personal faults. Now, why, for instance, was 'The Passing by of Timothy' refused?"

"Because it didn't adhere to the title," answered the editor promptly. "It was called 'The Passing by of Timothy,' and Timothy never passed by — he turned in at the gate. Don't you remember?"

"Oh!" said Jane. "Oh, yes, I — I — remember." There was a silence of a few seconds and then she said:

"But 'Mrs. Tompkins' Cake,' — *that* adhered to the title."

"Oh, yes, that adhered to the title," said the editor, smiling, "but we are strenuously opposed to accepting anything with an unhappy ending, and 'Mrs. Tompkins' Cake' ended unhappily — the cake was eaten up. Don't you remember?"

"Oh!" said Jane again. "Oh, yes, I remember." Then there was another short pause.

"But 'The Nail in Jonathan's Shoe' ended happily," she said, at last, "and it adhered to the title, too, and yet ——" She stopped and her stop was fraught with eloquence.

"Yes, that is all true," acquiesced the editor, "and I am glad that you reminded me of that story, for I wanted to compliment you on it. I liked it immensely — I really did; I kept it four months, if you recollect, and the longer an editor keeps anything the more he thinks of the author's work — always remember that."

"But you returned it in the end," Jane told him,

without looking as pleased as he had apparently expected that she would.

"Because, my dear child, it referred to a class, and we have a rule against matter which may offend any class. Do you understand?"

"No, I don't."

"I'll explain. We have among our subscribers over seventy-five thousand shoemakers, and we could not possibly risk hurting their feelings by anything so sharp and so much to the point as 'The Nail in Jonathan's Shoe.'"

Jane sat and thought.

There was another solemn silence.

And then she rose slowly and heavily (although she was but nineteen years of age); the editor rose, too.

"Just a parting word," he said, with his winning smile, "you do write well for a beginner, and if you'll keep a few points clear in your mind I believe that you'll come on famously. Just remember that we don't want anything that can offend any one, we don't want anything that deals with any problem; we want love stories principally, and they *must* end happily. And, by the way, I nearly forgot to warn you off of one shoal that shipwrecks thousands. We only accept stories of 222 words, or the multiple; it's the length of one of our columns, and you would hardly believe me if I were to tell you how many good manuscripts we are obliged to refuse simply because they do not count up to the proper number of words. Furthermore, let me sum all else up by begging you to pay more attention to your corners and less to your contour — in other words, exert your own brains to the end that your readers need never exert theirs. That's all."

It seemed to Jane to be quite sufficient.

"Thank you so very, very much," she said, earnestly but feebly, and went away, forgetting her umbrella.

Downstairs she felt faint and dizzy and battered, and took a cab home, intending to go to bed and cry. But the air did her good and her courage soon began to bubble and effervesce once more, because in Jane's Pandora-box it was Courage that stayed behind when every other attribute saw fit to fly to heaven.

By the time she had gotten home to her own ink-well she was full of a new inspiration, and as soon as her gloves were off she seized a pen and wrote a story on the following plan, the dashes being erasures.

"The Nineteenth Century."

"Eliza —— Whitby was dark complexioned and her —— eyes were gray and her eyelashes two-fifths of an inch long. Her —— nose was nothing either in or out of the ordinary, and her mouth was —— lovely. It was like Mona Lisa's in the Louvre (copy in the Public Library).

"When Eliza —— boarded the Nineteenth Century Limited she had on a —— green skirt and one of those —— —— black silk jackets which people buy in small towns to wear in New York. Her —— —— hat was up in —— front, and down in the back, and her —— heels were *not* French ——.

"On that day's Limited was a —— young man named Kenneth —— Kerr. He was —— tall, red-haired, freckled and had pale —— eyes. The kind of —— man who always has a good heart. The

kind of man that a —— girl in a black silk jacket is lucky to get —— —— ——.

"As I have hinted ——, here were two —— people —— fitted to make one another —— happy.

"The —— pity of the situation was that Eliza —— was on the Limited leaving New York while Kenneth —— was on that leaving Buffalo!!!

"When this —— fact has been fully assimilated, the reader must not feel —— bad, because Eliza and Kenneth were engaged anyhow. She merely happened to be returning to town the same day that her —— fiancé was called away on —— business of great importance."

"There!" said Jane with pride, when she had completed this masterpiece by crossing out the number of words necessary to its reduction to just the proper limits, "I reckon that's distinct and plain — and it ends happily, too."

She put it in an envelope and prepared to rush to the nearest post-box with it, but it was raining and she then discovered for the first time that she had left her umbrella with the editor.

So it was necessary to enclose a personal note with the "Nineteenth Century," and they left together on the following day.

The editor was delighted with — no, not the manuscript — but with the note, and something between the lines of the latter led him to return the umbrella personally.

Afterwards he found other excuses to keep on calling until finally ——

But there! I nearly forgot that I have among my readers seventy-three editors and five thousand seven hundred and fifty Janes.

BESSIE'S MOTHER

SHE descended upon the platform and looked quickly about — smiling brightly and expectantly. Then the smile died, for there was no smile to answer it. Bessie had not come to meet her mother.

"To be sure" — the mother told herself as she began to walk promptly towards the exit — "of course a hundred things might have prevented her coming. And I wrote her particularly not to try to meet me. I know the address and ——"

"Beg pardon, madame; is this Mrs. Field?"

The little mother looked up suddenly through the mist in her eyes — she had known nothing of the mist until she tried to look up through it — and saw a huge and resplendent footman, his hand to his hat brim.

"Is this Mrs. Field?" the man asked again.

"I am Mrs. Field," was the reply.

"Mrs. Langford's carriage is waiting."

"Is Mrs. Langford here?"

"No, madame."

So Bessie's mother went through the crowd to Bessie's carriage and was shut up alone inside by Bessie's footman and whirled away by Bessie's husband's pair of station cobs.

It was a strange ride after the long, hard journey. The traveler was tired, and something within her

felt hurt and crushed. She tried to look out of the window and take an interest in the five-o'clock problem of existence, but she saw only pale faces, weary faces, hungry faces, lame horses, thin, scared dogs, pitiful children. So strange for *this* to be Bessie's carriage! So strange for her to be in it all alone! So strange ——

The wheels suddenly shot off the cobblestones onto the smoothest asphalt, shot out from the din of trains above and trams and trucks to right and left, and into an altogether different world of glowing lights, gladness, and gracious glances from carriage to café windows.

Bessie's mother gasped afresh, knowing that this new world must be Bessie's world, and wondering hurriedly if her weary dustiness really felt any more at home amidst brilliancy than it had amidst squalor.

Click-clack-click-clack, sounded the horses' feet, as their round trot swept the carriage on across squares that were really triangles and triangles that were really short cuts. Click-clack-click-clack — and so on up-town, past this brilliant house, and that gayly carpeted entrance, and then a row of windows all flower-decorated and with tables ready laid behind them each.

And Bessie's mother — feeling painfully outside of it all, and yet at the same time so very much in the middle of it — and Bessie's mother trying to realize, and conscious only that every flash and gleam accentuated her own sensation of travel-dust and utter fatigue.

Cl-clack — clack — clack — ack — ack — halt!

The horses stopped. Two great iron-bound glass

lanterns hung on either side of a sort of Renaissance portal. All around the portal arose the trailing tracery and carving of some piece of fantastic and incomprehensible architecture.

The footman was down, and the carriage door was open. The mother stepped out; her eyes hastily ran all over the stone front with its five tiers of curtained — and unresponsive — windows — and so, and so, and so *this* was Bessie's home.

She went up the two wide steps, the doors opened instantly before her; she advanced into the brilliant hall — and there stood a gray-haired lady in an elaborate cap and elaborate courtesy.

"Mrs. Field, ma'am?" the question was the accompaniment to an interested smile.

"Oh, yes," said the little mother, her eyes glancing everywhere but into the face before her.

"Mrs. Langford was obliged to go out, ma'am; she was very sorry. If I may show you to your rooms ——?"

The mother was unable to answer; she could only motion assent, and then follow as the other led the way to the lift beyond.

They went up in the lift, and through its wrought-iron grills little glimpses of such beauty and luxury found their way that the traveler was yet more unable to speak when she was finally led out into a circular hall and through a curtained arch into an elaborately furnished suite where a fire burned brightly, a teakettle boiled on its silver standard, and a bowl of flowers said the "Welcome" that had so far gone unvoiced.

The housekeeper hesitated at the door; she was

one of those perfectly trained individuals who know just what they should do on all occasions.

"If you would like anything," she said, pointing to the bell, "will you ring, please? And Mrs. Langford will come as soon as she returns."

The mother had sunk down in a chair.

"The children ——?" she questioned, faintly.

"They have gone to bed," said the housekeeper.

"I almost wish I was gone to bed, too," said the mother smiling a little; "very well; thank you; good night."

The housekeeper went out; a little noise in the next room announced the placing of luggage; and then all was still.

Bessie's mother rose and began to unfasten her dress; every bone in her body cried for rest from clothing, a warm bath, and a recumbent position, and yet something in her heart cried louder for ——

Ah!

It *was* Bessie.

She had come in without knocking and stood still there in the archway smiling upon her mother.

Such a daughter for any woman to own!

Twenty-six years old, goddess-tall, angel-fair, gowned in velvet, diamonds about her throat and sparkling in the lace upon her bosom, a cloak of sweeping satin, sable-trimmed and silver-clasped — oh, such a vision of beauty and wealth combined!

"Oh, my darling!"

It was almost a scream — and altogether a sob — as the mother ran to her child.

The child shrank back — only a little, but very effectively.

"Mother, mother — I'm so glad to see you, but — but you mustn't weep on Paquin's productions, you know" — their hands and lips met — and then they were apart again. "I was so sorry not to be able to come and meet you, but Edwards found you all right, didn't he?"

"Yes, certainly ——" the mother had drawn back and Bessie had advanced to the teakettle and stood toying with the violets and so evidently thinking of something else that further words faded before her.

"Did you see the children?"

"They said that they had gone to bed."

"So? — too bad. But you'll see them to-morrow." She turned the kettle a trifle and then looked up. "How tired you look, mother!"

"I *am* tired, dear." Tears were terribly close.

"I don't believe that you will mind a bit what I have come to tell you; you really aren't fit for anything but a quiet dinner and an early nap."

"What is it?"

"Why, Royal forgot about your coming and invited a lot of people for dinner down-town, and the opera later. You don't mind, do you?"

"No, indeed!" The tears were locked back at once.

"I must hurry to dress," said Bessie, gathering her splendor about her, "and I will order your dinner sent up — and to-morrow we'll have the whole day together."

The mother smiled. She couldn't speak, but she could smile.

"Royal would have come up," said the daughter,

pausing in the archway, "but he has been motoring and has everything to change." Her eyes brightened as she added, "Wait until you see him to-morrow! He's ten times handsomer than he was ten years ago. And we're as happy as ever, mother."

The mother awoke next morning about nine o'clock. The whole house was deathly still. She arose and dressed herself quickly. Then she rang.

A maid answered with a dainty breakfast-tray, and when she had placed the tray on its little stand by the little sitting-room window she said, "Miss Graves is to bring the children down if you wish, madame."

"Now?" asked the mother, joyfully, "can she come at once?"

"I think so," the servant answered, smiling.

And five minutes later the three children and their English governess came in.

They were sweet children, altogether too quiet and demure for ideal Young America. Roy, who was eight, shook hands with his grandmamma and suffered himself to be kissed; little Betty did some kissing, but it was of the mildest possible variety; Bobby, the baby, stood and stared. Miss Graves said, firstly, that they never saw any company; secondly, that she would not have troubled Mrs. Field except that Mr. Langford had bidden her and thirdly, that it was time for their drive before their lessons.

So they all went away almost at once, and more absolute silence ensued.

About noon the mother grew frightened. To be in Bessie's house and to hear nothing — see nothing

— know nothing! And for so many hours! She did not know whether she was expected to leave her room or to keep it. If she left it she knew not where to go. It came over her suddenly that if she went out and moved about she would be embarrassed and confused at meeting one of the men or maids.

Quarter to one! She rang the bell. A man answered.

"Is Mrs. Langford ill?"

"No, ma'am. Mrs. Langford is asleep. When Mr. Langford went out he left particular orders not to disturb her."

The mother hardly knew what to say next. The man continued:

"Luncheon will be served in the breakfast room at half-past one."

Then he went away.

At half-past one Bessie's mother found her way somehow downstairs to the breakfast room, and ate her lunch in gloomy elegance. Afterwards she returned to her room.

About three a maid — a new one — appeared.

"Mrs. Langford begs to know if you will come to her room, madame?"

The mother rose and followed the maid.

Bessie's room was a glory of blue silk, satin, velvet, enamel, and turquoises. Bessie herself was before a cheval glass whose two wings revolved on pivots in a manner at once preëminently distracting and revealing. A maid was doing her hair, and another was lacing her boots — fairy boots of woven silver thread, be it said *en passant*.

"Oh, mother, to think of all I meant to do with

you to-day, and instead I've slept until three o'clock, and now I've barely time to get dressed and go to the Bellevue reception. I feel dreadfully about it."

The mother sat down very quietly; it had been a long day and she had thought a great deal.

"And that isn't the worst of it," Bessie continued, "we are to dine there and go to the Pictures afterwards; so I shall not see you again to-night."

The maid was offering a tray of ornaments to the hairdresser, and the latter was choosing fancy pins for Bessie's hair. Bessie watched the choice with interest — she did not see her mother's look.

"I feel dreadfully," she said again presently. "You see, Royal and I are *so* rushed. I do believe we're almost the most popular young couple in town. And we're so happy! — I'm *so* happy, mother."

"I'm so very glad of that," said the mother, and her tone was beautifully sincere.

Bessie turned her head to study the effect of the jeweled comb in her *coiffure;* when her eyes were satisfied she said with the quick catching after words of one who has forgotten to reply, "Yes; — oh, yes," and then she rose. The maid brought her dress towards her and as she entered its folds they rustled and rang and scintillated, so stiff was the silk, so thick the pendent pearl embroidery, so bright the silver trimmings.

The mother sat and watched.

"You've seen the children?" Bessie asked presently.

"For just a minute this morning."

"Miss Graves is so strict. Have you been out at all?"

The mother smiled.

"No, I was so tired — I needed rest most."

The maid was shaking out the dress folds; Bessie laughed a little quick laugh of relief.

"Of course — how stupid of me not to remember how journeys always use you up! I expect the quiet has been the very best thing for you."

The second maid was bringing a cloak of white broadcloth.

"Ah, that means time to go," said the daughter. "I'll have to leave you again now, mother dear, but to-morrow we shall certainly begin our visit."

She kissed her mother and went hastily out, leaving her sitting there amidst the blue of that bluest boudoir.

The next morning the mother had reconciled herself to the situation, had taken the coffee, roll and fruit at nine in place of the substantial meal that she was accustomed to at eight, and had sat down with some sewing afterwards.

She hummed a little song as she sewed, a song that had floated over Bessie's cradle in bygone years, and as she sang she thought of what a darling baby the cradle had held, of what a sweet, rosy child it had yielded up to the larger crib, and of what a rarely lovely girl of sixteen had been the result, a girl so rarely lovely that a young man speeding his motor by their gate had looked within — and never known peace after until the girl was his own. Well, Royal Langford was a splendid fellow — and they had been very happy ——

And Bessie's mother sang softly but cheerfully to herself as she sat alone and thought about it all.

The house was still — it was always very still — only the chiming of the different clocks occasionally broke the hush. The children lived in another part — the servants wore felt soles — and Bessie was asleep. The night before had ended very, very late — I mean, very, very early. There had been laughter, voices, and the jingle and rattle of silver and crystal below, at an hour so close to dawn that the mother above started up out of her sleep, and then lay down again realizing — well — just realizing. That was enough.

"Mother!"

It was Bessie's voice; it was Bessie standing again in the archway — this time with her eyes big and bright, her cheeks scarlet, her hair flowing loose over a *negligée* of silk striped with lacy ladderings.

The mother sprang up — her work falling forgotten to the floor.

"My child!"

Bessie came a little ways into the room and stopped where she could lean against a chair.

"Mother, I'm afraid that I am going to be ill — I feel *so* terribly strangely," the tone was almost a wail.

The mother was beside her, touching her hand. Her hand was limp — and cold.

"Lie down on my bed," she cried quickly. The second after, Bessie fell fainting among the pillows.

The mother ran to the bell and rang it loudly, then she sought her own little medicine-case and its restorative bottles — and by the time the maid arrived she had the messages worded for telephoning.

"Mr. Langford and the doctor — at once."

Royal was easily secured, for he was still asleep in his room. In five minutes he appeared and remembered only in a most perfunctory manner that he had not seen his mother-in-law before, in the two days that she had dwelt beneath his roof. For Royal Langford loved his wife passionately, and the mere idea of her illness drove his mother-in-law back into the rear corners of his brain.

"My God, what has happened?" he exclaimed, going to the bedside and flinging himself down there. "What *is* the matter — she is always so well?"

"Perhaps it is nothing," said the mother, chafing the cold hand nearest her — "but — but send for the doctor."

"Doctor!" Royal's great black eyes were fairly devouring his wife's unconscious face — "Fifty doctors! A thousand! — but — oh, Bessie, Bessie!"

The mother's hand touched his shoulder — sympathy was in the pressure — and affection — was not Bessie his, too?

"Can't you carry her to her own room?" she asked.

"Wouldn't she better stay here?"

"But — but can she stay here?" the mother glanced around the diminutive chamber — its contrast to the blue throne-room below was marked indeed — but Royal understood nothing of her thoughts.

"Wait until Edmoor has seen her," he said, never lifting his eyes from Bessie's face — "we'll do what he says — Great Heavens! — if he says she's really — really — seriously ill! — "

The mother's heart was hideously heavy. She

went over by the window a moment and steadied her lips; when she came back Bessie's eyes were open — but saw nothing.

Royal — his heavy dressing gown spreading almost like a pall over both — was bowed above his wife, kissing her, and bidding her speak to him.

"She doesn't hear you," said the mother, kneeling close by them both — "my poor boy!" her tone was gentle — not at all as if her distress was crying also, "be patient; the doctor will soon be here."

The doctor did come soon — as soon as the telephone reached him. He was not an old man, and was a very large and handsome one. He looked at Bessie's mother — at Royal — and then at Bessie.

He ordered her carried downstairs to her own room.

And then he ordered more. He took the mother downstairs into the library, and, shutting Royal and all the world outside, talked long and earnestly.

The little mother opened her lips — her lips that had been closed but never sealed — and told the doctor what had come to her in these few lonely, bewildering hours.

He nodded — he understood.

It was the Price — the Price one pays when one has gone the Pace that Kills; and the lovely young butterfly must fold her brilliant wings and pay it out to the last ounce of diamonded debt.

And no man could say where the end would be.

Then came long weeks — long, long, long weeks.

The doctor came and came, the mother watched and watched, and time dragged its comfortless pass-

ing and kept the future for a hideous riddle whose answer was unknown.

Then — finally — there came a night when Bessie seemed to draw her breath as one who yet will live. The doctor took the mother downstairs and gave her the first real hope that he had dared to counsel. She went back to the bedside above and prayed, and towards midnight the sick woman looked straight up into the eyes bent above her.

"Mamma!" she murmured faintly, and at the childhood name the mother's heart swelled nigh to bursting. "Mamma, where's Royal?"

(Oh, mother-hearts — the burden of your bearing! — The first cry after all those weeks and then it was for some one else!)

"He is here," said the mother — and called him — and then stepped back into the shadow as he took his wife in his arms. For a long minute Bessie clung close to her husband and then the leaven — the new spirit that was striving towards birth — led her to cry:

"But mamma, Royal? Where did mamma go?"

The mother came back then and her face was laid against the sick girl's trembling lips. . . .

And the next day there was a relapse and things were infinitely worse again.

The mother — who had seen the new-born hope — and had understood — was freshly tireless now.

"Your wife's mother will be ill next," said the doctor to Royal one afternoon. The doctor — in his long term of two visits a day — and his supplemental library consultations, had come to be more of a family friend than ever.

Royal was gnawing his mustache in misery over the danger of the one who was dearest, and only nodded. He could not compass further fears than those he was lavishing on the wife he so adored.

There was another period of desperation, and then one afternoon Bessie came to consciousness again.

"Oh, mamma," she gasped, painfully, "must I die? I don't want to die."

Her mother held her hand — and smiled, yes, actually smiled. Hope was in the smile — but hope was dumb.

"I don't want to leave Royal," said the younger woman — "nor my babies" — and then, like a strange, ghostly cloud, the veil rent itself and showed the light beyond and Bessie stretched out her hand weakly and added — "nor you, mamma — nor you."

With the words the barrier broke, and the daughter was in her mother's arms — a child again. The mother soothed her to her bosom and spoke no word. What word was there to speak? Royal came in and saw them thus together, and went quietly out. And Bessie slept with her head on her mother's heart as in her baby ways and days.

The doctor, coming in, would not disturb them, but stood and looked from the shadowy doorway for a long time. Downstairs he said to Royal:

"The danger is over now. Mrs. Langford owes her life to her mother."

"And to you," said the husband, whose joy was inexpressible.

"Oh, as to that ——" Edmoor simply shrugged his broad shoulders. He knew how much care meant

and how much medicine meant. Perhaps he knew even better yet what Bessie's mother meant.

When Christmas came, Bessie was able to be propped up by pillows and receive a diamond necklace and a cheque from her husband as a token of appreciation of the kindness she had shown him in living.

And then the children, who had not seen their mother in months, were admitted to the room, and stood, three in a row, at the foot of the bed, and regarded her with curiosity.

"I know all my 'rithmetic tables now," Roy hazarded at last; "grandma made me learn 'em all."

"An' I can sew," said little Betty. "I have sewed you a sachet to smell of — see!" she held it up as she spoke. Bessie's eyes wandered to her mother.

"Did you teach her?" they asked. The mother nodded.

"You could sew when you were six," she said, "why not Betty?"

"An' we tum in the big room an' see papa ev'y night," said Bob, "an' we say prayers, too — we say 'em to God an' grandma."

Bessie's look went slowly back and forth between them.

"An' we have stories an' go-to-bed songs," Bob added, "an' we go to grandma 'stead of Katie when Miss Graves goes out."

But Bessie's cheeks were flushing, and the little ones were taken back to their Christmas tree and fairyland of toys.

"I hope I haven't interfered," the mother said rather timidly after a little; "the time has been so

long for them as well as for us. And I only tried to fill your place as well as I could."

"Interfered!" Bessie's tone was a struggle; and then at last she said, "Mamma, come to me" — and then, when her mother had come — "I almost wish I'd died," said the invalid, "it — it — seems as if you do everything so much better."

The mother-arms enfolded her — enfolded a new daughter who was learning a new motherhood and whom God was blessing thrice in the learning.

The long months of a winter convalescence rolled smoothly by, while Bessie rested pale and lovely among her cushions, and her mother sewed on dainty muslins and laces and silks near by.

"I'm glad you are teaching Betty to sew," said the daughter one day. "You sew so beautifully yourself. It will be nice for her to know when she gets old, too."

"Yes, I think so," said the mother, smiling.

"And I want Betty to be just like you, mamma," said the younger woman, wistfully, "so dear and sweet in her home. I don't care so much about the rest of the world as I did."

The mother smiled gently.

The doctor and Royal came in a little later, and had some tea and approved the invalid's progress and laughed and chatted and then went out together.

"Mamma," said Bessie, when they were alone again, "the doctor said you saved my life. Do you know what I thought when Royal told me that?"

"No," said the mother, rolling an edge and looking interested, "what did you think, dear?"

"I thought," said Bessie, slowly, "how terrible it would have been if I died — if I had died — without your ever ——" she hesitated and stopped. Her mother looked up and their eyes met.

"We were very selfishly thoughtless — Royal and I," said Bessie, her own eyes filling — "selfishly thoughtless of every one except each other ——"

The mother interrupted her by coming quickly beside her and laying her fingers on her lips.

"Bessie," she said, earnestly, "it was all right — I can forget it all — because — because — you *were* all in all to one another. That is such a beautiful and blessed thing ——" she paused, and her lips pressed her daughter's.

"Mamma," the latter whispered, "I want to tell you something. Royal and I have been talking — and we — we don't want you to go away again. We want you to stay here."

"Yes, that we do," exclaimed a voice behind them.

The mother drew away and turned to see her son-in-law smiling on her.

"You will have to," said Bessie, "we can't any of us ever spare you again."

The mother looked at her and then at Royal. Something in his face led her hastily to gather up her work and set a few stitches in hasty confusion.

Bessie was smiling from her pillows. Her husband sat down beside her and took her hand.

"Persuade her, Royal," she said.

Royal stared steadily at his mother-in-law and watched her slightly troubled face.

"We certainly can't spare you," he said. "Ed-

moor and I were discussing the subject just now. He feels even more strongly than we do," and then he smiled broadly.

The little mother looked helplessly at him, and then helplessly down at her work again.

"Why, mamma," Bessie cried suddenly, "aren't you blushing?"

"I'm afraid I am," confessed the culprit, miserably. "I shouldn't be surprised at anything I did. I feel so foolish to act so, but — but ——" she folded her hands on her sewing and tried to look firm.

"Of course she is," said Royal, delightedly. "Bessie, you don't know your own mother, yet. She has been flirting with the doctor, and now she is engaged to him and going to be as rich and as fashionable as yourself. He has just told me, and begged me to tell you, as it appears that she cannot make up her mind to tell any one herself."

Bessie's eyes became startlingly round.

"Mamma!" she cried, "is it really so?"

The little mother just nodded her head. Bessie gasped.

"Why, how old are you?" she asked, blankly.

"I'm forty-three," said the mother, whose waist was as tiny and whose hair was as brown as Bessie's own.

Bessie turned to her husband. Her face was a study of conflicting sentiments, but after a little, one got the better of all the rest.

"Royal," she said, half appalled and half appealing, "why, she isn't *old* at *all!*"

Royal laughed outright.

"It certainly looks as if she was terribly young, doesn't it?" he cried.

"Mamma ——" Bessie began.

But the mother had gone away ——

Not upstairs — but down to the library.

WILFRED AND HIS GRAND-MOTHER

I NEVER shall forget my first sight of Wilfred and his grandmother.

It was on the beach of Rocabey and the tide was out — away, 'way out. That wonderful mile of wonderful sand was covered with people walking, riding, bicycling, and just in front of where I had paused, men playing polo. A steamer was putting out for Jersey beyond, the walls and chimneys of St. Malo stood out clear against the western sky, and to my right the long horn of the diked bank curved slowly east and north and so on out of sight.

My eyes wandering idly here and there over sunset, polo ponies, and the miscellaneous crowd, were suddenly and irresistibly attracted towards a small boy and an old lady who emerged therefrom and came leisurely along towards me. Never shall I forget my first impression of the pair nor my intense momentary interest even though I saw them but for a few seconds and never expected to see them again.

Wilfred was about eight years old. He was clad in what must have been immaculate white within an hour's time, and he bore his hat in his hand. The hat was a large straw with wide, white silk ribbons and the ribbons trailed on the wet sand so that they were muddy and draggled beyond description. The

edge of the brim was also muddy and that portion of Wilfred which in moments of complete relaxation would naturally come in contact with Mother Earth had evidently been sat upon freely and without thought until the white suit was what nursery maids call a "sight!"

Wilfred's grandmother might have been expected to have appeared distressed under these circumstances but Wilfred's grandmother, even at that first glance, struck me as a thing apart, most utterly apart. She was perhaps sixty and most pleasant and placid to behold. She had her bonnet slightly over one ear and her right hand trailed her parasol behind her, while her left made hardly any pretense towards holding up her silk and flowing dress from off the sand. Her gaze, like Wilfred's, was directed towards the polo playing, and whether she accidentally trod on his hat ribbons, or whether he accidentally fell over her parasol, neither ever for a second ceased to gaze on with the same delicious absent-mindedness, the same happy-go-luckyness.

And so wandering, they wandered on and on down towards St. Malo, and I, watching them out of sight, watched and wondered myself, and then forgot them for twelve years' time.

Our next *rencontre* was at Oxford whither I had gone to witness a nephew row in the Eights. The first division was over and my party were being leisurely poled towards the Haven of Tea when my attention was suddenly attracted by an approaching punt which bore a most uncommon couple. The lady was all of seventy, and so stout that the other

end of the punt kept lifting itself out of the water like the nose of some inquiring fish. She wore a large shade hat, and it had been tipped this way and that way for comfort until its dip could be determined only on the basis of some undiscovered mathematical computation. She had a large cushion at her back and one of its ruffles was in the water; also some inadvertent paddles had splashed her pretty freely in a way that the sun had not dried up. But all these minor details went for naught when one caught a glimpse of her face. Heavens, what a smile of utter beatitude was there! She was contemplating her companion who was paddling — twenty and handsome. He was paddling the very slowest way that one could paddle; he was sitting on a cushion that also trailed in the water; he had an unlit cigarette in his mouth; but in spite of the gap made by twelve years' travel, I recognized Wilfred at once.

And now I took the time to learn about them.

It wasn't a very remarkable story. It seemed that the boy had been practically born an orphan and that he and his grandmother had early developed a complete congeniality. Money being plentiful they had traveled all his life and as the years passed their tastes had never learned to differ.

And after that we drifted apart for eight years more.

The eight years brought me the guardianship of the most delightfully bright and energetic little maiden whom it has ever been my lot to meet. Raised by a strict mother and educated by the clock, so to speak, this dear, pretty Bettina had never known the

joy of idleness or the idleness of joy until one winter a slight cough drove her to Cairo and my protection. Soon after her arrival I was called to London on business and my little ward had to be turned over for the intervening period to a very interesting Englishwoman who happened to be living there just at that time.

I was gone four months, and when I started back Bettina met me in Paris. She was not alone; she had with her Wilfred and his grandmother!

"But, Bettina!" I cried aghast.

"Now, uncle," she said, laying her cheek against mine, "don't. Now, please don't. Even if you want to say things you mustn't, because I love Wilfred and I shall hate you."

This logic staggered me to silence.

"You see," Bettina continued, "you are so like mamma that you can't possibly understand Wilfred or his grandmother. They're so lovely; they're so calm; they're so restful. I've been so hustled and bustled all my life that it's like heaven to be with people that are so sweet and peaceful. They don't eat breakfast till four o'clock sometimes, and Wilfred says he never yet has gotten up or gone to bed until he felt just exactly like it. When they lose things they never hunt; they just buy more, and Wilfred says he doesn't know what worry means. It's Paradise on earth, that's what it is, and whatever you say, we are going to be married in June. If you want to be horrid and not give me my money Wilfred's grandmother says I can just go around Paris and pick out what I fancy and send her the bills; and Wilfred says, if it's

too hot to bother with picking out, to have a few *trousseaux* sent to the hotel and give the chambermaids what don't suit me. So there!"

Bettina paused, quite out of breath, and I tried to collect my thoroughly scattered wits.

"Wilfred says he doesn't care a damn what I spend," Wilfred's *fiancée* added after a minute.

"Did he say that?" I asked.

"Yes, and his grandmother apologized."

"My dear," I said, "that alters everything. I didn't suppose Wilfred had anything so energetic as that word to his name. If he has, it proves much, and I — "

"Yes—" Bettina inquired anxiously, as I paused.

"I give my consent."

"Oh, uncle!"

Then she hugged me ecstatically and dragged me away forthwith to call on Wilfred's grandmother.

Do you know, Wilfred's grandmother and I became then and there the best of friends.

It was half past twelve and she was eating breakfast, it being one of their early rising days, and Wilfred was out in his motor looking at another motor, so we were quite cosy and informal.

I found that Bettina would be loved, petted, and cared for to the limit, and I went away to cable her mother with a well content heart.

They were married in Paris in June and went to Norway in a chartered yacht taking the grandmother with them.

That was four years ago. Now come here to the window and look over towards the Pilatus side of the garden. We have this villa for the summer, so that

the baby Bettina, who was unduly energetic and screaming in London may grow calm by the Lac des Quatre Cantons. Do you see down there by the arbor, those two coming this way? It is Wilfred No. 2 and his great-grandmother. He is dragging his horse upside down; he is very placid, is Wilfred No. 2. And the grandmother, God bless her, is more beatific and smiling than ever.

And I am not ashamed to confess that I have learned to drag my cane instead of swinging it. Whether it is old age or force of example I cannot say, but I find it most reposeful to the nerves, and I am going to set down in black and white, right here and now, that in these days of hustle and bustle I have learned, with my dear little niece, to find thorough joy and peace in life with Wilfred and his grandmother.

THE CRADLE

HE was sitting at one of the tiny tables in the Ritz, just because he had been "over" long enough to have acquired the tea-habit, and to be beset with a thirst that only tea would satisfy as soon as "feef o'clock" came to time each day. Sometimes he fulfilled his craving in the Bois, or at the Palais, or in one of the many private salons where he was *persona grata*, but when he was near he liked the Ritz — because — because — oh, because the Ritz is the Ritz and has an atmosphere apart and individual.

The afternoon was fine and the tables were all full; a constant succession of visitors moved in and out, and a constant (in another sense of the word) succession of other visitors sat and watched them. It amused the man already mentioned to watch these watchers — the ones whose enjoyment consisted in contemplating the enjoyment of others, — the little groups who choked down their tea between absorbed on-looking, — the people who came there not to satisfy any need except that of their curiosity.

There were many such in the room and his eyes roamed meditatively over them all until — having completed the circuit and encompassed the whole crowd — they came back to the starting point and saw that the starting point had altered during their

tour. The two regally blonde French women who had been there a minute ago were gone, and in their stead sat a diminutive creature with an elderly lady — the one in gray, the other in black.

The tiny one was daintily tiny, fairy-like in the extreme. She was exquisitely gowned and her attire was so perfect in its simplicity and so devoid of any species of ornament that an American or English woman would never have given her a second glance, while a Continental would have suspected and lorgnetted an empress *incognita*. She had on a gray hat with little soft gray silk roses tucked beneath its brim, a gray jacket with gray lace (gray lace costs, let me tell you) imbedded in its yoke and cuffs, a *princesse* gown of tucks so finely laid as to hair-line the cloth, gray *bottines*, and a bit of gray silk stocking showed where her foot advanced beneath the table.

The man across the way could not but admire, and continue to admire. She was talking with her companion — a conversation devoid of animation, but evidently pleasant and interesting. Only once did she turn her head at all; — and then a flash of remembrance shot full in his face —!

It was the little girl who married Dick Bentley the autumn before he died, — the little girl who came from San Francisco all alone to marry him when the doctors said that he could not go to her!

Six years ago — that was!

He was getting up and dragging his chair across towards her. He did not seem to remember the usages of society in that minute — he remembered only the wonderful sweetness and courage that the wee little thing had shown at that long-ago wedding,

when she had taken the vow to be a widow at once with the vow to be a wife.

"You remember me? — Davis, you know! I was at your — at Dick's —" he stopped short, but her hand was put forth and her eyes (gray, too) were smiling.

"Yes, of course. How pleasant to see you here."

There was something unutterably quiet yet sincere in her voice. He sat down.

"You are staying in Paris?" he said.

"For a few days, yes; we leave to-morrow night, however."

"And I, to-morrow noon."

"The Riviera? — the Channel-train?" she asked.

"The Channel-train."

"Ah!" there was no fluttering interest in her manner — only a sweet cordiality. She did not look at him, but at her tea-cup. He was full of desire to know of her, nevertheless.

"You are traveling?"

"I think I may call it that. We stay a few weeks in one place and then in another."

"Always?"

"I have no home. I was an orphan, you know. I can't remember either my father or my mother; and there came no child to me." Suddenly, there in the midst of the five-o'clock Ritz, her face went down in her hands; across her bowed head the elderly lady threw a meaning glance at Davis, who was fearfully shocked at the sudden emotion betrayed by one so full of self-control.

But the next instant she was smiling through a mist (also gray) and saying —

"Oh, we like to roam about, madame and I. And we amuse ourselves as we go, *n'est-ce pas*, madame?"

The elderly lady smiled. Affection and deep sympathy both were manifested in her face.

"And so you go to-morrow," the girl went on — a little uncertainly; "if it was not that we go, too, I should ask you to call; but as it is —" she made a significant gesture.

"But I wish that I could come," said the man hurriedly; "I do wish I could come. Can't I come to-morrow morning — just for a few minutes?" His tone was very earnest and pleading.

"But I am going shopping to-morrow morning," she said, "and it is something that I cannot put off."

"But I can go, too," he declared eagerly. "Haven't you seen how the men here go shopping with the women? Let me go with you to-morrow."

She looked at him and he saw a strange sort of conflict in her face, and then she blushed. Anything more heart-storming than that blush was never seen before. "Oh, let me go with you!" he all but begged. It seemed to him that he had never in all his life wanted permission to do anything so much as he wanted hers to accompany her on that "*tour de commission*."

She played with her teaspoon a long minute and then she said, "Very well, come then. I am at the Hôtel de Bade, and I will be ready at half-after nine."

He was exact to the minute on the following morning and she was, too. She came down directly his card went up, and again her gown was gray and as simple as befitted early morning.

"This is really very nice of you," she said as they went out to the cab, "but I'm afraid you'll be bored — men at home do not interest themselves in these expeditions generally."

She smiled.

"What are we going to buy — if I may ask?" he said, as the cab rolled away.

"We are going to buy a cradle," she said.

"A cradle!"

"Yes, a cradle. I have a little friend here in Paris whom the world has made poor, but whom Heaven is making rich — and I have promised her a cradle. You see the world has made *me* rich and Heaven has left me poor, so the best pleasure life gives me is when I can balance the load a little for someone else." Her great eyes turned towards him and something rose oddly in his throat, so that he could not possibly speak to her.

"I take a great deal of pleasure helping people," she said, "and madame is lovely about helping me to help them. Places where I cannot go, she goes, so we can know every person and know just what they need. I have a bed in ever so many hospitals and a long list of dear sick or unhappy people in almost every place we stay. It keeps me from thinking of my own life — it teaches me that sorrow is not mine alone."

She paused for a minute and then went on in a brighter tone, "But the cradle is not exactly charity. You see, they ran away — Sophie and her lieutenant — and were married, and the parents declare they will not forgive them — but, of course, they will. They have a cunning apartment and a *bonne* and

tout cela, only poor Sophie feels it is almost scandalous that she cannot have real lace on every little thing she is making, and so I have promised that the cradle at least shall be suitable for one whose grandpapas are a baron and a general."

He found himself still unable to articulate.

"You won't mind?" she went on, a shadow of anxiety darkening her voice; "you know you said yesterday that men went shopping often. I've seen them every day, and I think it is very sweet to see. At Madame Jeanne's yesterday I saw a very great man indeed, choosing his wife's hats, and I admired him all the more for it. I like the way they both work together here; the little time that Dick was spared me we never went one single place apart; we used to laugh when he bought cigars with me and I hair-pins with him."

The cab was crossing the Pont Neuf and beginning its struggle for existence in the Quartier Latin.

"I assure you," he said, "so far from minding, I feel deeply honored. I — I'm very glad I took tea at the Ritz yesterday."

She gave him a glance so devoid of anything but gratitude that an echo of the swallowed choke came back — and just then the cab stopped.

They alighted.

It was a big and brilliant store and the windows were full of cradles containing happy waxen babies.

They went in.

Instantly a clerk was before them — smiling, bowing, deeply concerned for their welfare.

"A cradle, a 'completely furnished' cradle."

Ah, on the second floor — all — everything would

be found there. Monsieur would see, madame would view — a moment till the lift descends! *Voila!* take care of the crack in entering! — Cradles — furnishing — second floor!

The elevator took them up and as they quitted it he had to notice the lovely heightened interest in her face. She looked up and down the vista of little beds and said softly, "Just to think that a baby will come to claim every one of them — "

But another clerk was before them — another of those perfect beings whom all the shopping public of the wide world may well envy Paris — and a very few other cities.

"A cradle! at about what price? — this way, I beg." They went around to the other side and there stood twenty in a row — all different — each exquisite — some in enamel, some in carved wood, some in gilt or in silver, some made of great silken ropes interwoven, some made of twisted bamboo.

He could only watch her face as she moved up and down the line, touching them with her gloved fingertips — the touch as tender as the expression on her face.

The clerk was not voluble, — he was silent, he saw the sale was made beforehand. He answered questions and sometimes he looked at Davis. Davis hardly knew what to do with the look; he felt it would be thieving to accept, and yet it was too overwhelmingly delightful to refuse.

She stopped at last before one that outshone all the rest. Two great storks carved in dark wood held, hung between them, a basket of woven silver.

"Do you think it is too much?" she asked Da-

vis, with an irresistible appeal in her tone and eyes.

The clerk did not even trouble to raise his eyes — he thought he knew — (and he did).

"No, no indeed!" came the answer.

She flashed one look of radiant joy over the two men and the cradle.

"And now the furnishings," she said, breathlessly.

As they moved away she slipped her *porte-monnaie* into her companion's hand. "You can pay it all," she whispered. He nodded.

They sat down before a great table upon which were displayed samples of blankets, coverlets, wee tucked pillow-slips, lace-edged spreads and so forth.

"You're not bored?" she said to him — her eyes and cheeks and lips still overspread with the wonderful tender charm — "you're sure?"

"Bored!" he ejaculated. And then he was silent and watched her.

The clerk brought out great rolls of carefully corded-up treasures, and she bent above them and reveled in them and chose from among them.

"Do you think I am foolish?" she asked him just once, when a little down quilt with a wreath of hand-embroidered roses was under consideration.

"I think you are an angel!" he answered.

She laughed a little soft laugh and took the quilt.

Finally it was all over. She gave the address: "Mme. Léon de Gourville, 11 bis. Passage de la Visitation," and he drew out his purse.

"Oh, that is the wrong purse," she reminded him quickly.

"Sh — later," he said with authority. They brought him the change from his two thousand-franc

notes, and then the clerk ushered them back to the elevator and wished them *au revoir*.

When they reached the door below it was raining; the cabman had raised the hood, and stood ready to tuck them in behind its apron.

"I have been very happy," she said, when they were moving again; "it was kind of you to be so patient."

"But I was happy, too," he declared.

"What a strange thing a woman is," she went on; "we are no better than children after all. Do you know my pleasure this morning was hundred-folded by the knowledge that that clerk — that man that I shall never see again — thought I was buying for myself. To know that he thought I was one of those heaven-blessed women that really do exist! — to think that he was quite sure of it — oh!" her face suddenly went down in her hands again just as it had the afternoon before at the Ritz. "God help me!" she sobbed — and then was instantaneously brave again.

"But we must settle our accounts," she said, putting down emotion with finance — the latter being death to sentiment of any sort the world over; "how much was it all?"

He battled fiercely with that horrible lump that had risen again at the sight of her face in her hands.

"It was nothing," he said.

"Nothing!"

"Listen!" he put his hand hard on hers to gain emphasis. "Listen! — it's been a — a wonderful morning for me, too. I'm rich, too — let me do some good, — I pray you by — by all that is holy —

let me give the cradle; I ask you with — with my soul."

She was still for a minute. Then she looked at him.

"Are you really rich?" she asked.

"Very," he said, tersely.

She was silent for another minute; then, "I shall tell Sophie," she said, simply. "I can give her something else myself."

They came to the hotel a little later.

"And you leave to-night for Dresden?" he asked, as he accompanied her within.

"Yes, and you go to Calais?" she replied.

They touched hands.

"Good-bye," she said, gently.

"Good-bye."

He reached his hotel in good time to make the Gare du Nord and the Channel-train, but he did neither. He went to his room and — throwing himself across a large easy-chair — thought.

And thought.

He was a man and yet he forgot to lunch. He never forgot before, or after, but he forgot it that day.

He sat still thinking until nearly four o'clock, and then he sprang up and rang furiously.

"*L'Indicateur*," he said to the boy who came; "here," he tossed him a coin, "ask in the office if I can get a compartment on to-night's German express — the one that goes to Dresden. Tell them to send — to telegraph — it's — it's *vital*."

AS TAUGHT BY ELLEN

I REMEMBER the day that the difference between them first dawned upon me. I remember it distinctly. Brother and I were playing in "the sand." "The sand" was not just sand (although it *was* sand too), but a generic name applied distinctively to the strip of ground which ran between the house and the fence on the side where the sun did not shine. It was our play-place on hot days, and it had been rendered a delightful spot by the addition to its natural charms of a layer of clean brown sand one foot deep.

"The sand" began away back by the wood-house, and it stretched endlessly — almost — towards the front piazza. We never played in the wood-house division, nor yet beneath the dining-room windows, and we never even ventured down where the front piazza and the morning-glory vines were, but we spent every second that the sun scorched us to seek shade, in that sweetly cool and agreeable portion where the air was freshened with the odor of baking and where our small doings were rendered pleasantly important by the cheerful smile and deeply solicitous interest of Ellen in the kitchen.

Ellen was the cook; Norah was the second girl; and all this befell in the good old days when I was

young, when the cooks did the washing, and the second girl "helped" with the children. Norah "helped" with Brother and me, and we accepted her help and asked no questions — until the day that the difference began to dawn.

I remember as if it were yesterday how Ellen pulled the pegs out of either side of the old-fashioned screen, and raising it, handed us each one a pair of chickens' legs to plant. She had dried the legs in the stove, so that they were hard, and then had washed them clean.

"There do be two apiece," she said, smiling.

We were delighted. She had shown a wonderfully proper appreciation for the fitness of things by giving me the bright yellow pair. Being the girl, I ought, of course, to have had the bright yellow ones, and I was glad that Ellen had understood.

While I was living out my small character by rejoicing in the best pair of (chickens') legs, Brother lived out his by asking, "What can we do with them, Ellen?"

Oh, the wide good-humor of Ellen's beneficent grin as she replied: "Sure, you'll be after plantin' 'em an' raisin' the chickens for next Thanksgiving pie."

We smiled, the idea was delightful. We looked meaningly at one another, and just then the whole scheme of charm was rudely shattered by a voice from above — a voice from the window over the dining-room.

"Ellen, ye'd ought to be ashamed o' yerself — deludin' them childern with such a lie as that."

It was Norah, in the window shaking a blanket. Norah looked — just as she always looked. Our

eyes went from her face to Ellen's, and Ellen looked just as *she* always looked. And there was *such* a difference.

It was a difference altogether beyond our understanding. It was vague and yet apparent. It made chickens' legs lovely to receive and then it made one ashamed to plant them after all.

That day at dinner I asked, "Papa, what is 'deload'?" for we had decided that the clue to the puzzle must center in Norah's mysterious language.

Papa looked straight at me.

"Not 'deload,'" he said, authoritatively, "the word is '*un*load,' and it means to take from anything or anybody that which loads them — or for one to discharge that which he is carrying himself."

Brother and I exchanged a helpless glance. As applied to raising chickens from planted legs our father's speech was anything but elucidative.

And so we gave it up for the time being, only accepting the great fundamental domestic principle that between Ellen and Norah there was a difference.

Life ran pleasantly and peacefully on for a year or two.

Then came another day which I well remember.

The circus was coming to town — not any particular circus, but "the circus"; and as our lives had never harbored but one circus before, and as Brother was altogether unable to recall any details of that one, we were both naturally much excited. The boy who passed down our street had thoughtfully thrown *two* handbills over the fence — a piece of delicate courtesy highly appreciated upon our side.

We took our hand-bills straight to the kitchen, and there displayed their glories. Norah, who was sitting by the window darning stockings, sniffed tremendously when Ellen avowed her amazement over the elephant who was standing balanced on the tip of his trunk. Ellen declared that her "fellow" would certainly have to take her to see that elephant, and Norah said "Umph" in a tone that only a sister would dare use to a sister. (I fear that I forgot to state before that Ellen and Norah were sisters.)

Then Brother gave a little gurgling laugh of utterest joy, and we saw that he had turned his hand-bill over and come on a wondrous presentation of a walrus making a pudding out of a cook-book, while six seals brought him the ingredients. The walrus wore a cap and spectacles, and held the book open with one flipper while he stirred vigorously with the other. I can assure you that you never saw the like — he really suggested grandma the day she did the mince-meat. Yes — for a fact.

"Do you s'pose he really reads the book?" Brother asked.

"Well, the idea!" cried Ellen, "an' him that wise 't the priest himself looks no wiser. Oh, sure, 'n' me bye 'll have to take me now, 'n' if the puddin' do be good I'll take the resate 'n' make you one like it for Sunday."

Norah laid down her stocking and lifted up her hands.

"Ellen Cartey! 'N' you a Christian girl. Tellin' two innocent children as a fish c'n read a cook-book!"

Ellen laughed. I can hear her laugh now — such

a hearty, wholesome rippling! We looked at her, and the sting of Norah's words faded.

"He does read it — doesn't he?" Brother repeated.

"Read it!" said Ellen, "well, only wait till I take a look at him. Why —" she cried after an instant's scrutiny, "only be after seein' what he's bid the little ones bring him — sugar, milk, eggs — all pudding things, 'n' how could he know to ask for them if he hadn't looked them out in the book?"

Her logic was unanswerable, her position was one of triumph. Norah gathered up the darning basket and departed in great disgust — and we stayed behind and discussed the entire hand-bill with Ellen.

The difference was plain to us now. We did not, perhaps, understand, but we felt and knew. That night in bed I said, "I'm going to pray not to be like Norah," and Brother answered sleepily, "It'll be shorter jus' to pray to be like Ellen."

Whichever prayer I decided in favor of I recollect I voiced most fervently, and then I slept, and with the morning came great news.

Norah was to be married!

For months she had been knitting linen lace, and now we all knew why. I heard mamma tell papa that it was a mercy that it would soon be over, for she was not worth two cents any more.

The day of the circus Mr. Norah (as we called him) came in a buggy and took her somewhere, and a week later she went away for good and all. She cried all the last two days, and was angry with Ellen for trying to cheer her — and then we saw her no more.

Three years later the government opened a reservation to the public, and Ellen's "fellow" drew a farm. It followed that the year after he drew Ellen, and from then on we only saw her at long intervals when she came to the State Fair — always with more family and fewer teeth.

The last of these visits was day before yesterday, and the great subject of Ellen *versus* Norah was at last fully illuminated to my understanding.

She sat in the parlor, gripping her umbrella hard, and smiling as generously as ever — and this is what she said:

"No, ma'am, I wasn't down last year, no — nor the year before. You see, we've had two years' run of poor crops now, an' we didn't feel like affordin' it. Then Norah died, you know, 'n' I was there the best part of the winter with her. Yes'm, she left five, two boys 'n' two girls 'n' a baby. It seemed like I must take 'em home with me, but we couldn't feed any more, an' Norah's husband's mother was there to look out for 'em. But you know the way I am, ma'am — them children jus' preyed on my mind day and night. Seemed like I couldn't sleep for thinkin' of 'em — 'n' Norah me only sister, too. An' then the tale come as the oldest boy was put in the Reform School! Oh, I cried like a baby — it was more than I could bear to think of Norah's boy in the Reform School, an' I jus' got on a train an' went an' got them to let me take the boy an' brought him home with me — an' I wouldn't ask a *nicer* boy, ma'am, barrin' he won't mind any to speak of.

"Well, ma'am, the next I knew come a letter from Mary — that's the oldest girl — askin' me to send

her five dollars for a ticket, an' she'd run away an' come too. Awful unhappy she was, an' the letter that sorrowful, an' her but twelve year with it all. Seems the old grandmother treated her shameful an' made her work out with the men in the fields, an' so on. What could I do, ma'am? It was wringing blood from a stone to get that five dollars, but we got it somehow, an' sent it up, an' she come, an' maybe bein' her aunt I shouldn't say it, but the *best* girl — just as spry an' obligin', barrin' a terrible eater, but I tell me man she'll soon be the age to want her waist small, 'n' then we'll be easier as to keepin' her full.

"An' now I want to tell you the fine endin' of it, ma'am — like a story-book it is, for a fact. It was the second month after Mary come — you see she'd writ back to Nellie (that's the other girl), an' she must have writ a beautiful letter, for Nellie jus' got crazy, an' what does she do but go in town an' sell a ring of Norah's an' buy tickets, and she an' the two little ones slipped off unbeknownst and took the train for me.

"Well, ma'am, they got down all safely an' only one thing went wrong. They walked out, meanin' to surprise me, an' I was in town an' missed 'em. So when I got home it wasn't just the same, but I did all I could to keep them from mindin' the surprise bein' a little spoiled. An' they do *so* well. They fit in with my childern like it was one family, an' comin' one at a time like that keeps us from feelin' the difference in the bills."

"How many children have you of your own, Ellen?" mamma asked.

"Well, ma'am, there's *my* Mary — she's the oldest, you know — an' then there's the seven boys, but — but — " the sunny face clouded, the cheerful voice trembled — "but, you know I lost my little Susan, an' — an' I've been so lonesome for my little Susan, that I'm hoping these other childern'll fill her place an' h-h-help me to bear it."

She sobbed outright — and then in a second she was laughing through her tears.

Mamma gave her some wine and cake, and then we very rapidly laid our heads together to the end that the burden might be in some degree lightened.

And that is the little tale of great teaching, and may God bless Ellen now and forever.

HIS ONE AND ONLY MEET

"NOW I'll tell you," said his English friend to Wister, late in the evening of the day before, "now I'll tell you! I'll lay you any odds that to-morrow makes you all over new and alters all your views of our country. Just wait until you get really at it — get into the spirit of the game, so to speak."

Wister, who was probably as little of an Anglomaniac as any American alive, tried to smile hopefully.

"You never hunted in your life, I suppose," Henley went on.

"Not foxes," said Wister, looking across at the window which was well down at the top — the same as the fire in the grate.

"What *do* you hunt?" asked Henley, who knew himself to be an ideal host, and was happy in the knowledge. "Bear? Mountain lions?"

"Ducks and grouse, prairie chickens."

"Oh, I say, one doesn't hunt birds — one shoots them."

Wister crossed his legs the other way and thrust one chill hand in between his two chill knees.

"What will you do if to-morrow proves bad weather?" he asked, tactfully.

"Oh, but it won't, you know," said Henley. "It never is at this season, you know."

The rain, driving hard against the window on the other side of the room just here, seemed to require some explanatory addition to the above statement, and so its maker added, agreeably:

"It may rain a bit, but that won't amount to anything."

"Do you mean that you shall go out even if it rains?"

"Of course," said Henley. "But it won't rain, I tell you. It never does. And — if it should — why, we all have covers for the saddles, you know."

Wister stared at him, digesting the latter bit of reason very slowly indeed.

Soon after they went to bed, and the last thing that the American heard was the steadily driving rain mixed with a gusty wind — the two gaily mingling upon his window pane.

The maid bringing in his early cup of tea the next morning woke him to a wonder as to what the night had brought forth. She let up the shade and lit the fire and spread a bath rug and set out a tin bath with an enormous brass pot of boiling water in its middle — and then, when she was done and gone, the stranger in a strange land sat up and looked abroad. It was still raining, but there was a bright steel streak around the western horizon.

"I wonder what that means here?" Wister said to himself, and got out of bed with a reluctance that was excruciating, and — skipping the tea, which he abominated — began on the bath.

When he was dressed he went downstairs. There

was a pleasant air of bustle about, and one of the doors was standing wide open, letting in a fresh, sharp wind.

Henley, in hunting attire, came out of somewhere.

"Hurrah," he said when he saw his friend. "Look what a day we've got!" and he extended his hand, and Wister saw with a curiously appalled thrill that he meant what he said.

"You're going out, then?" he asked.

"Going? Of course. Look at that horizon. Could anything be finer?"

Wister felt struck dumb, and went in to breakfast in that state. Gwendolyn Garry was standing by the table in her riding things.

"So sorry you don't hunt," she said, lifting her beautiful eyes to the American's. He had been wondering if he was in love with her, and now he felt a new access of wonder about it.

"I suppose that I might learn," he said, "but I'd never care for a day like this."

"Day like this!" said Gwendolyn in surprise. "What's wrong about to-day?"

But before Wister could reply, Mrs. Dent and her husband came in, and Major Rodney, and they all sat down to breakfast.

There was a great deal of conversation about thickets, and covers, and scents, and breaking, during the meal, and Wister, who was hopelessly out of it all, amused himself with watching Gwendolyn's enthusiasm and wondering if she could ever be happy with an anise-seed bag and the length of Long Island to hunt over. But then all of a sudden he heard his name, and discovered that they had

dropped the fox as a subject of conversation and taken up his unworthy self.

"I shall drive him," said Mrs. Dent, "and the rest of you can go in the motor."

"Indeed I sha'n't," said Gwendolyn Garry. "I shall ride my own horse and keep him cool. I shall not lose such a morning in motoring."

"I could drive him," said Major Dent, looking thoughtfully first at Wister and then at the gray drizzle without. "I could take the cart and go around by Chippy Widgetts and let him see the old church there. It would be a good day to put in that bit of sightseeing, and it isn't but three miles out of the way. You mustn't miss seeing the church at Chippy Widgetts," he said, now turning and addressing himself to Wister. "It's half Norman, and they used to ring the same bell whenever they saw the Danes landing."

"Wouldn't *you* like to drive Mr. Wister, Gwen?" asked Mrs. Dent of Miss Garry. "Jenkins would ride your horse to the start, and he could leave right now if you want him kept cool."

Wister looked earnestly at Gwendolyn Garry, and Gwendolyn Garry returned his look with a wide-eyed consideration that was more thoughtful than complimentary. "Oh, I'd so much rather ride than drive," she said at last, and Wister became conscious of a draft through the conservatory which he hadn't noticed before.

"Ha — a — oh," said Major Rodney all of a sudden, "I'd offer to drive Mr. Wister, but I don't know where the church at — oh — h-h — Chippy Widgetts is."

"No, no, Major," said Mrs. Dent earnestly, "you sha'n't drive any one. I'll drive him sooner myself."

Wister, feeling very much like an undesirable lot that was up at auction, now interposed and disclaimed any pressing desire to see the Chippy Widgetts church.

But he found that he was wrong in supposing there was any avoiding that.

"Why, we *couldn't* let you go without seeing the Chippy Widgetts church," cried Mrs. Dent, looking absolutely appalled at the very idea; and Henley said reproachfully to Wister, "Whatever are you thinking of to suggest such a thing," so the American gave up.

"It just comes to this," said Major Dent. "*I* shall drive Mr. Wister, Gwendolyn can ride her mount if she likes, and the rest had better go in the motor."

This speech seemed to be looked upon as final, and so as soon as breakfast was over all the English began to don mackintoshes and bunches of violets, and Wister went up to his room and surreptitiously put on a sweater under his coat.

From his window he could see horses being ridden by in twos and threes, with an occasional enthusiast in a pink coat and yellow rubber apron jogging by on his own beast. The drizzle was settling into a rain, and below in the court the men were putting rubber covers over everything possible. Gwendolyn Garry, with the water streaming from her hat brim, was off and up the road with the rest, and when the stranger went downstairs he found an extraordinary assemblage wreathed in smiles and yellow waterproofing awaiting him there.

"Come on, old fellow," said Henley gaily. "Dent's waiting in the dog cart, and we're giving you a start on account of the church at Chippy Widgetts."

"Now, I wonder if you hadn't better take an umbrella?" said Mrs. Dent solicitously. "You might need it, you know."

Wister looked at her to see if she was being intentionally sarcastic, but it appeared that she was not.

"Yes, I think we'd better take an umbrella," he said.

The maid brought an umbrella, and every one crowded out under the porch to see them off.

"Hadn't you better take the County Guide?" Mrs. Dent exclaimed suddenly. "Mr. Wister may like to read up about the church on the way there."

"Oh, no," said Dent. "I can tell him all there is to know."

"Show him the house where Charles II. slept if the gate is open," said Major Rodney. "The — oh — h — gate may happen to be open, don't you know."

"And *don't* be late," Mrs. Dent said. Her husband now mounted the dog cart and Wister climbed after him. The groom put two saddles in waterproof cases in behind, and they drove off through the streaking rain, Wister holding the umbrella between his knees like a cane.

"I wonder if I hadn't better raise it!" he hazarded meekly.

"Well, you might try it," said Dent. "But the wind's so likely to turn it inside out."

The cob went spanking along between the drip-

ping hedges, and the visitor tried the umbrella. It turned inside out at once.

"They generally do," said Dent. "You have to hold to one side to keep them straight."

Wister wrestled with the umbrella, while the road mud flowed freely into his eyes. When he got it right side out again he was glad to shove it in behind the saddles.

"How far is it to the meet?" he asked then, feeling warm for the first time in England.

"Oh, we're close at hand to-day," said Dent. "Thirteen miles. Only you and I are going a bit out of our way for the church at Chippy Widgetts."

"How far out?"

"Three miles. It'll make nineteen miles going for us."

"Great Scott!" Wister exclaimed.

"Oh, that's nothing," said Dent. "We hunt all over the county. Take the train with the horses sometimes — often, in fact." The rain was coming down faster and faster.

"That's a nice place," said Dent, indicating a gray blotch in the distance. "Fine outlook over the hills."

"I should judge so," said Wister, the rain running into his collar all around at once.

"There's a ghost, too," said Dent. "Did Henley tell you?"

"No."

"That's odd. It's one of the sights of the county. Next after the church at Chippy Widgetts, in fact."

They bowled along more merrily than ever. As the gray streak on the horizon lessened the rain descended more and more heavily.

"It looks as if we might be going to have a wet day," said Dent, looking over his shoulder at the saddles.

"It does look so," assented Wister.

"But it's the rarest thing in the world at this season. Mists and little flurries, yes, but a really bad day almost never."

"I hope you know," the guest rejoined with fervor.

"Oh, I know," said Dent.

And now the rain began to descend in good earnest. The hedges ran into indistinguishable masses.

"How far are we?" Wister asked.

"Oh, we're nearly to Chippy," Dent replied.

"Where the church is?"

"Oh, dear, no. The church is at Chippy Widgetts, four miles farther on." Wister gave a slight start.

"You mustn't do that," said Dent, seriously. "You'll let the water pour in on the cushion beneath you."

"But don't you think we'd better skip the church to-day?" suggested the stranger.

"What for? We'll never have a better day to see it, and we're so near now." Wister was silent.

"Every one would reproach us if we didn't show you the church at Chippy Widgetts," said Dent gravely. "There's an old stone coffin there. Heaven knows whose it was."

"You don't say," said Wister, uncomfortably aware that his start had let the very thing occur that Dent predicted.

"Oh, I say," said Dent, "I wonder if you hadn't better try putting up that umbrella again."

"Willingly." So saying, Wister hauled the umbrella out from behind and hoisted it forthwith.

They came now successively to Chippy and to Chippy Widgetts and to the church.

"But I don't believe you'd better try getting out," said Dent. "Your seat will get so wet, you know, and there's really nothing to see after you do get down. All you want is to be able to say that you saw it, and you can say that now."

"I'm perfectly satisfied," declared Wister. "And now for the fox."

"Yes, now for the fox," said Dent. "It's rather a long stretch across country here, and pretty windy, so look out for the umbrella."

It telescoped as he spoke, and broke a joint in the frame with a loud snap. They now faced eight miles of the elements untamed.

It was a long, wet spell of weather, and Wister was frankly delighted when a sort of thickening of humanity proclaimed an approach to the end.

"Where is the meet?" he asked.

"Ecksley Farms," said Dent. "Ah, there they are now!"

A turn around the corner of a high stone wall suddenly brought into view a cheerful mêlée of horses, pink coats and general joy. A dozen turns of the cart wheels put them in the midst of the confusion.

Within an old stoned courtyard forty or fifty hounds looking to be mainly spots and tails were flocking about four or five men in costumes that suggested jockeys more than anything else to the stranger. Around this central grouping rode some

twenty hunters, all smiles and drip. Outside quite an array of motors and carriages were drawn up.

"So this is a meet," said Wister.

"This is a meet," said Dent, who had suddenly become surprisingly alert and wide awake. "Ah, there's Henley, and now where the dickens is my groom, I wonder!"

"I'll hold the horse if you like," suggested Wister.

"No, I don't want to get the seat wet," said Dent. "There's Millicent — Mrs. Dent — she'll find him."

Millicent came out of the crowd and rode up beside them, all smiles, like every one else.

"Isn't this a sight for you?" she said to Wister. "You took so long I was almost afraid that something had happened. It would have been a shame to have had you miss this."

"Oh, I wasn't going to have him miss it," said Dent. "And he saw the church at Chippy Widgetts, too."

Gwendolyn came riding up. She looked rather streaky, and Wister wondered if he could ever make her happy according to her ideals.

"Isn't this fine?" she appealed to him with shining eyes, and then he was almost sure that Fate had never meant them for one another.

"You must be getting out, dear," said Mrs. Dent to her husband. "Jenkins is coming."

"He'll drive Wister to see anything that there is to be seen when we get off, I understand," said Dent.

"Yes, I've told him," said Mrs. Dent. "Come now, hurry."

Dent got the dog cart as close under a tree as

possible, and descended therefrom. Wister held the reins. A nice old gentleman peered pleasantly at him over the apron of his victoria, which was drawn up on the other side of the tree.

"That's Lord Todmarty," whispered Mrs. Dent from her horse. "He never mounts until the last minute."

Wister looked at Lord Todmarty and wondered why he mounted at all under the circumstances.

The "jockeys" now rode out of the enclosure, surrounded and followed by the entire collection of spots and tails. There was a general excitement at once, and every one began to hurry aimlessly about. Only Lord Todmarty continued to peer pleasantly, and one gentleman who had been sitting in a covered motor reading a newspaper rose and slowly quitted a fur coat and put on a pink one.

Dent came running up, all exhilaration, and searched the bottom of the dog cart for a glove which he had dropped.

"They're making for the cover now," he said to Wister, as he pounced on it. "I do hope you'll have a chance to follow along."

Gwendolyn Garry rode out of the court and off across the field with Major Rodney and another man. Lord Todmarty began to unbutton the victoria's apron.

"They may find any minute now," said Dent, enthusiastically. "Oh, I say, what this all must mean to you, seeing it for the first time!"

Wister smiled. The smile let all the rain that was in his ears spill out and into his collar.

"You'll never forget to-day," said Mrs. Dent, who was conjugally awaiting her husband.

"I don't believe I ever shall — I'm sure I never shall," answered Wister with feeling.

Lord Todmarty was climbing cautiously up on his horse; Dent sprang on his.

"Come on, Millicent," he cried, and they all set off together. The next minute, with a sudden hue and cry, the whole rout broke across the field, and the horse that Wister was holding began to jump about in sympathy.

"One minute, sir," cried Jenkins, running up and putting a large collection of irregularly shaped mackintosh things into the back. Then he scrambled quickly into Dent's place, and seized the reins.

"Where do we go now?" Wister asked, watching the last riders disappear through a distant break in the woods.

"Well, sir, if we drive down by Chutney Knoll and wait there they're very likely to all come back that way in the course of an hour or so."

"Is Chutney Knoll a house?" Wister asked.

"No, sir; it's a field."

"Then we won't go there," said the American with great decision. "We won't go there, and we will go home, and we won't hunt any more to-day."

Wister was asleep in the long chair in his room when the hunters returned. The clothes he had worn in the morning were drying below and he was feeling pleasantly disposed toward life in general and his own land and its mode of life in particular. He was more than confident that he could never make Gwendolyn Garry happy, and he was very content that it was so.

When he heard the noise of the home-coming he went below and welcomed them. They were very wet and muddy, but extremely cheerful over everything. The hunt had been successful.

"Oh, if Jenkins had only done as I told him," said Mrs. Dent, "you would have seen the whole thing. We passed right by Chutney Knoll within thirty minutes after leaving you."

"I can't understand his bringing you back here," said Dent severely. "I distinctly told him to take you to Chutney Knoll and to wait there at least three quarters of an hour in any case."

"Oh, I didn't care," said Wister. "I saw a lot."

"You saw the church at Chippy Widgetts anyhow," said Dent, "and that'll be something to talk about when you get back to the States."

Gwendolyn Garry was stripping off her wet gloves.

"*What* a ride that was!" she murmured in a tone of intense content; then she looked at Henley, whose clothing was making a separate puddle around each of his boots, as he stood before the hall fire, steaming. "What *should* we have done if it had been a bad day?" she asked him plaintively.

"Oh, I say," said Dent, "don't talk heresy. It's never bad weather in the hunting season, you know."

Wister looked wonderingly at them all.

"And I'm said to come of English stock, too!" he thought.

Outside the storm swirled and wailed. The wind battered against the windows.

"You'll always look back on this day with pleasure," said Henley to Wister.

"Yes," said Wister. Gwendolyn was looking at the fire. He felt no desire to lead her to any altar, either of the Chippy Widgetts church or of any other church.

THE ADJUSTED HONEYMOON

AS the bell boy set down the two bags he thrust his hand into his trousers pocket and drew out — a cent. Although she was not looking at them, it was none the less trying. With a smothered explanation he sought again, and pulled out — another cent! How the dickens did those coppers come to be upon him, anyhow! He felt hot and nervous, and then with a desperate dive he procured a dollar and — although he knew that it was entirely too much — handed it over at once, and the boy grinned and departed —

Leaving them alone.

They had been married just four hours, and both were fully aware of the fact, but determined not to betray it even to each other. She stood by the table looking at the telegrams and letters and cablegrams spread out there. Her gown was very new and very blue, and her eyes were very bright and her cheeks very pink. He walked carelessly over to the window and let one of the shades up; the setting sun streamed in unpleasantly and he had to pull it down again at once.

"Oh, this is from Alice Cary," she said, with deep, earnest joy.

He remembered that he was carrying his hat in his left hand and still had on his overcoat. He laid

the hat on the mantelpiece and began to take off his overcoat. The sleeve caught somehow.

"And this from Louise," she said delightedly. "The dear thing — to think of me to-day."

The coat sleeve still caught; he had never had a coat sleeve catch like that before in his life. His ears were getting red, he knew. Ought he to ask her to help him? Would it make things any easier?

"Dear Uncle Andrew," she said, "he wants us to be sure and give them a couple of days. I shall love to have you see that old place."

Darn the coat sleeve! He managed to get into the next room with both arms stuck out behind him and kick the door partly shut. Then he had to take both coats off at once, and there was — yes — there actually was a pin point protruding from the shoulder seam of his new cutaway.

"Well!" he said, "Well!" and a few other things, and returned to the parlor. He noticed the flowers now for the first time. They were really very well done; there were some potted ones that wouldn't be withered when they were getting breakfast next day. "Heavens, next day!" Was it possible that pleasant, peaceful, placid, unperturbed days could *ever* follow in the wake of this one!

All those faces when he and Bob had come out from the vestry — and he had forgotten to pull down his cuffs, too! And Bob had dared to say under his breath, "Steady, old man!" just as if he had been nervous. Nervous, he! He had been as cool as a cucumber; he always was as cool as a cucumber, but it certainly was very close here, and would she *ever* stop reading those letters!

He looked at her furtively and tried to realize that only three days before they had been playing tennis together; and only last night the whole wedding party had been so jolly and informal, but to-day, everything had changed to-day.

She had changed. She had changed most awfully. She had been so pale in the church, and afterward at the house they had to give her a cordial; it surely was a great strain getting married. It made him feel queer, and he was a big, strong fellow. Perhaps she ought not to stand there so long reading those letter things. What possessed people to send them letters; they didn't want letters now that they had each other.

He ought to interfere some way. He started to roll a chair up for her to sit down; one of the chair's legs caught in the rug and pulled it all crooked. He tried to put it straight with his foot, but he couldn't; he had to take the chair up bodily and put it down beside her, and then all but go down on his hands and knees to straighten the rug.

And she hadn't noticed any of his efforts. "This is from Bessie Bell," she murmured, "dear old Bess!" He remembered Bessie Bell, he remembered her very well; he had been engaged to her for three weeks once, and they had quarreled over his smoking. He wondered whether Bessie would have confined *all* her attention to telegrams the very first hour.

He went over and opened the window. The dust blew in. He shut the window. Then he cleared his throat. Then he cleared his throat again. The arti-

ficial effort suddenly resulted in a genuine sneeze. Now, that was pleasant! Suppose she laughed!

But she didn't laugh. She was reading another of the apparently numberless epistles. And only last night she had slipped away from the rest to kiss him good-by and remind him that that was their last good-by forever. What a change between last night and now. He cleared his throat again.

"Have you taken cold?" she asked without lifting her eyes.

"I don't believe so." His tone was most cheerfully conversational. "I hope not," he added.

But she made no further remark.

He went over and looked out of the window again; he was thinking of Mrs. Brookes. He had told Mrs. Brookes that he was sure he would never know what to do with a wife, and Mrs. Brookes had told him that when he found himself actually married and off with his wife affairs would adjust themselves naturally and he would know just what to do with her. He wondered if Mrs. Brookes would call matters as they stood "affairs adjusting themselves naturally." Nothing was natural. Nothing had been natural since he had walked out of that vestry door this noon. And last evening they had been so happy together; she had been so bright and gay among her bridesmaids. And then that good-by kiss! And now would anybody have the goodness to look at her! Reading congratulations as if the man that they were congratulating her upon getting wasn't there right within ten feet of her, being treated as if he was no more than a stock or a stone.

He went and took his hat off of the mantelpiece

and carried it to a branching hat rack that stood in the corner of the entrance hall. He was behind her now; she looked very pretty even if she did still have on her hat. Her hair was so pretty — he had always thought her hair the prettiest hair that he had ever seen. And she had in it the little jeweled pin that he had bought her as an anniversary present when they had been engaged just twenty-four hours. How sweet of her to be wearing it to-day. It seemed so sort of poetic, somehow; it showed that she hadn't *completely* altered — hadn't ceased *altogether* to care about him now that they were married.

He cleared his throat again. She started.

"I didn't know that you were there behind me," she said with a catch in her breath.

"Just hanging up my hat," he explained with a carefully careless tone. He wondered what she would answer, and then what he would say, and then what she would say to that, and then — and then —

But she said nothing. Only tore open another one of those confounded envelopes, took out another of those blasted sheets of paper and went on with that infernal reading. And Mrs. Brookes had told him that he need not worry, that things would adjust themselves naturally. Naturally! Humph!

He walked up to the other side of the table. There was nothing to do there. He turned a discarded envelope over twice. Talk about honeymoons! If this was a fair sample he should make a point of telling a few of his friends a little of his experience when they got back. Did any one ever see anything alter anybody like getting married had altered this girl! And only last night she had been

so affectionate; she had laid her cheek against his coat, and rubbed it softly up and down there, and called him a silly boy, and had been perfectly sweet, and now look at her! She was actually so absorbed in those things that she had forgotten him altogether. They must have been alone for the best part of an hour and she had not paid the least attention to him yet.

He turned the envelope over and over in his fingers. Then he drummed on the table with his nails. Then he cleared his throat. Then he thought of Mrs. Brookes. Then he thought of Bessie Bell. He did wonder whether Bessie Bell would have behaved like this.

He took out his watch. Five o'clock. Why, it wasn't but fifteen minutes since they had come in, and it seemed like an hour. He put up his watch. Then he took it out again and looked at the fob. Her mother had given him the fob for Christmas. Her mother had been so serious in bidding them good-by to-day. Her mother had charged him to be good to her. Well, *wasn't* he being good to her? If any mother could ask any man to behave better than he was behaving he would just beg that mother to indicate what possible alteration in his conduct even a saint might desire.

He cleared his throat again. His throat was actually beginning to feel raw. Suppose he had a sore throat! Suppose he had laryngitis and became dumb for several days! That *would* be interesting!

He went to the window and then back from the window. Suddenly he remembered Carl Adams, a man who had been popularly considered as his rival.

What under the sun should bring Carl Adams into his head now! Such an idiot as Adams was, anyhow! He wondered if she would have treated Carl Adams as she was treating him. Adams was milk and watery. He thought with scorn that very likely Adams would have gone in and begun unpacking his trunk. That would be just like Adams. To think of his trunk before his bride would be just exactly like Adams. He was going to be very curious what sort of girl Adams would marry — if he ever did marry. He could just fancy how he could treat her, too. Probably act as if he was afraid of her. Adams never did have any nerve, or any stamina, or any backbone, or any anything.

She was opening the last one of the whole blessed, cursed pile! Hurrah, patience was to have its perfect work at last. He felt his fingers tingling. He went and looked out of the window once more. When he turned she was thoughtfully folding the paper and slipping it back into the envelope.

"I suppose that they must all be answered," she said, laying it carefully on the pile.

"Now?" he cried in an indescribable tone.

She could not help laughing. "Not *right* now," she said, controlling it to the limits of a smile at once.

Then she began to unpin her veil.

"Can I help you?" he asked, approaching.

"Thank you, I'm well used to doing it alone." She removed it as she spoke. "Do you want to try to fold it?" she said, holding it out to him. He took it. He was perfectly joyful over her noticing his existence.

"Am I folding it right?" he asked earnestly.

She nodded; she was drawing out her hat pins. Then she lifted her hat off and fluffed up her hair in a way that made her look just as she always looked.

"I suppose that I must unpack now," she said with a little sigh.

He thought desperately of Mrs. Brookes. Then he thought of her mother. Then he thought of Adams. It seemed more than probable that Adams in such a minute as the present would stand where he was. There was nothing of the Adams about *him*, so he refused to consider standing where he was standing one second longer. He moved around the table and stood beside her. She was holding her hat in one hand and he took the other. Such a pretty little soft white hand!

The next second she was in his arms, and when he recovered consciousness he had forgotten her mother and Adams, and only remembered Mrs. Brookes. Great Scott! but Mrs. Brookes was a smart woman — Mrs. Brookes knew what she was talking about!

* * * * * * *

He had bolted the door, and was sitting in the chair whose legs had so awkwardly rolled up the carpet. She was in his arms, her cheek was softly rubbing up and down against his shoulder.

"Do you know, dear boy," she whispered, "I almost thought that you were *never* going to kiss me. What *would* I have done if I had not had those letters to pretend to be reading!"

SEEKING BLINDFOLDED

LETTY had been looking forward to this minute for six weeks. For six weeks she had hardly thought of anything else. For six weeks she had been holding her mental breath, so to speak, in a sort of ecstasy of impatient wonder.

The whole proposition and acceptance and carrying out of orders had been as entrance into another world for her. The having screens fitted to the windows of the two rooms, the arrival of the piano and rugs, the very fact that it had been arranged that the stranger should have her meals served in her own quarters! Letty had never thought that one *could* eat at the upper end of a flight of stairs; her views of luxury in the way of dining had been hitherto encompassed by the knowledge that it *might* be done out of the kitchen. As to a piano up-stairs — as to the screens — as to four trunks for a young lady who purported to be anxious to live a life of utter retirement for the summer, it was all beyond the present scope of Letty's understanding.

She stood by the door now, gasping audibly; Miss Holden, her long veil floating back from her traveling turban and her hands thrust carelessly into the deep pockets of her silken ulster, was by the window looking out at the stretch of meadow and

orchard. She was unusually tall and slender, and Letty was unusually short and stout. When she turned from the window the contrast between them showed yet more strongly, for Miss Holden was dark and richly olive in tint, while Letty was sunburned blonde — that kind of blonde which invariably has yellow eyebrows.

I said that Letty was gasping audibly; she stood by the door with one hand on the knob, as if delayed by the possibility of an order to be given, but her real feelings — although many and mixed — were too strong for successful concealment. Miss Holden read them at a glance, her inward self warming suddenly with the intense pleasure of good-natured superiority in perceiving acute acknowledgment of the fact. With two long, graceful steps, a droop and a bend, she attained and sank into the large easy-chair which had been part of the preparatory shipment, and then said, smiling:

"What is your name, my dear?"

Letty felt transfixed. The grace, beauty, condescension and subtle charm of the speaker very nearly made her dizzy.

"Lettice Danbury," she replied.

"Oh, you are Mrs. Danbury's daughter?"

"Yes, ma'am."

Miss Holden held out her hand; Letty compressed her lips, drew a long breath, approached slowly — and took it. It was an exquisitely white, soft hand, with pink, shiny nails and several rings. Lettice's own was red and as broad as it was long.

"Don't call me 'ma'am' — I'm only a girl like yourself."

"Oh!" It was frankly a gasp this time.

"I am going to stay here three months," Miss Holden continued; "let us be friends."

"Oh!"

"I am going to lie down for a while now to rest from my journey; when you bring up my tea perhaps you can stay a little and visit with me?" She could feel Lettice's hand turn damp and hot within her own; she took it to be the result of sudden joy. "Will you come?"

Again the long-drawn breath. Then, as if wrung out:

"Yes." And Letty fled.

May Holden arose from the chair the minute that she was left alone and locked the door. Then she advanced to the mirror and looked at herself.

"How well I stand traveling — I never get tumbled!" (She began to unpin her hat.) "I believe that I shall really be very comfortable here; it looks so!" (She removed her hat carefully.) "And that girl! — poor little undeveloped thing!" (She carefully folded her veil.) "I see why I am here," she said, with an earnest faith in her own words which was almost touching, considering the care with which her summer residence had been chosen and prepared. "I am sent here by Fate to bring that girl to the knowledge of her own soul."

She began then to unlock and unpack her trunks, the usual way in which a traveler "rests," and although she was both neat and quick the task was one which kept her wholly occupied until the afternoon was almost over. In the stress of collar-boxes, dress-hangers and tissue paper, all else was forgot-

ten until the cuckoo clock chimed half-past five. With a pleasant sensation of having accomplished wonders unaided, the new summer-boarder hastily exchanged her dress for a loose négligée of pink cambric, knotted her hair carefully into a careless loop, unlocked the door and was back in the deep chair with a book when Letty came awkwardly in with the tea-tray. That a tea-tray was something totally unknown in the house or the neighbourhood was only too evident from its laying and its lading, but Miss Holden smiled sweetly over the whole.

"Don't forget that you are coming up to sit with me," she said to Letty as together they lifted the pie off of the ham and sorted the plates, tea-pot and spoons.

"No," said Letty; "but I'll have to help mother wash the dishes first."

"Oh, to be sure." The summer guest smiled more sweetly than ever. "Is there a large family?" she asked further.

"There's father, and mother, and grandfather, and the boys — there's three boys — and Emily; she's my little sister, and — and ——" She paused.

"What a large family!" the stranger commented.

But Letty was gathering fresh breath to some purpose.

"And there's Reuben!" she blurted out suddenly, and became so deeply, darkly red that her eyebrows would have had the effect of two flashes of lightning if only Miss Holden had been looking at her — which she was not.

"Who is Reuben?" she asked, pleasantly.

Letty's bosom swelled. "He's our hired man," she answered.

"Ah! Well, don't forget to come and sit with me this evening."

"No; I won't." Then she went out.

The boarder, left alone, proceeded to lean an interesting book up against the tea-pot, which was rendered of great solidity by its full quart of bitterly strong liquid, and to read while she ate her evening meal.

When the latter was satisfactorily concluded she laid the book aside, arose and went to the window. The warm, intense hush of a country nightfall was without. Nothing living was to be seen. Her eyes moved slowly and happily over the wide-stretching meadow land, and in and out among the crooked tree-trunks of the orchard. A little soft night-wind stirred the ribbons that tied the pink cambric négligée; they fluttered artistically, and their wearer sighed.

"This is just my ideal," she thought, with all the fervor of a city child newly turned loose among the milk-weed. "I was quite right to put myself to this test." Then she raised her hand and replaced a lock of hair that the breeze had loosed from the moorings, but the lock, replaced, refused to stay there, and drifted out to sea again. "How *do* girls manage whose hair is not naturally wavy?" she wondered, and then the noise of the door behind her reminded her of Letty's undeveloped soul, and she turned quickly towards its possessor.

Letty had come up for the tea things. She looked

very hot, in accordance with Nature's law, which locates the kitchen on the breezeless side of every farmhouse. She also looked troubled, and her new friend — again within the easy-chair — observed the fact.

"When you come up to chat I shall be so interested to hear all about your life," she said, graciously.

Letty looked so unfeignedly miserable that it was impossible not to observe the fact.

"Things do not always go to suit me," said Miss Holden, consolingly; "things often trouble *me*."

Letty piled the dishes together with a vigor which did not dissipate the clouds upon her countenance.

"I have really had quite a little tragedy in my life this spring," said Miss Holden, who was by nature communicative, and had had no one to confide in since she left a chance acquaintance on the train. "I mean to tell you all about it when you come back."

Letty was speechless with a lump in her throat, but smiled with heartrending bravery, took up the tray and went out.

"She really has great sensibilities," the newcomer remarked to herself. "Dear me, fancy the possibilities of unfolding its true world to a nature in a chrysalis like that; it will — be ——" The phrase died on her lips unfinished, as she opened her book again.

The twilight stole on, and on. It finally grew too dark to read. The book lay closed. The reader's eyes looked out upon the black silhouette of trees and the star-lighted sky above. She was wait-

ing for Letty, and Letty came not. Letty seemed to take a good while to wipe dishes for her mother. "I suppose that it is a lesson in patience for me," reflected her would-be enlightener. "I must learn to accept the lessons of every hour in a cheerful spirit." A cricket outside was chirping shrilly. "I wonder if he will keep that up all night?" The frogs were croaking, too. "I always forget what a racket frogs make when I am not absolutely listening to them." Then a lonely cow began to moo, and appeared incapable of discontinuing. "They must have taken away her calf — poor thing. Well, I suppose there is a reason for it all." She arose and began to walk up and down. "And to think that this time last night I was at the theatre!"

Just then Letty came in. It was so dark that she fell against a chair at once. Miss Holden hurried solicitously towards her and came crash against the table.

"Oh, where *is* a light?" she exclaimed.

"We can't make a light; the gnats come in so bad." Letty extricated herself as she spoke, and they both groped towards the window together.

Now was the psychic minute in which the educated nature was to lay hold of the uneducated and begin its first missionary work with the indigenous heathen. Miss Holden did not waste a second on preliminaries.

"I'm so glad there's a girl in the family," she said. "I know we shall be friends. We can each do so much for one another; I can teach you and you can teach me. Life is so marvelous; have you ever thought what a great kingdom God gave you to rule when He let you be born an intelligent being?"

"No," said Letty.

"I'm going to give you a book to read; it's such a splendid book. I only read it first last spring, but I wish I had read it when I was ten years old. It's all about what we can do in the way of ruling ourselves. Are you fond of books?"

"No," said Letty; she felt rather blue for more reasons than one. In anticipating Miss Holden's coming she had never pictured her as anything like this.

"Ah, you haven't been rightly trained, then. But never mind; we won't talk books, we'll talk life. Life's best lessons are out of life itself. How old are you, my dear?"

The cricket had now taken up his post right under the window, and a tree-toad had chimed in out of tune.

"I'm seventeen," said Letty.

"And I'm twenty-one," said the other girl; "only four years as time is counted, but what an eon when you consider experience!"

Letty hitched uneasily in her chair; she didn't know what an eon was, and didn't care, but she did know where she wanted to be, and that she wasn't there.

"Have you ever loved, my child?"

Letty's chair creaked with the start she gave; she did not reply immediately.

"I am so distressed over my love-affair." Miss Holden's chair creaked with the adjusting twist which *she* gave as a preliminary to the story which she had not told since she told the lady on the train. "Of course you won't tell? It's the tragedy I said I'd tell you about, you know?"

"No," said Letty; she felt glad that the conversation had skipped all necessity for her replying to the previous question; Letty, as the reader has already gathered, was by nature better fitted to be a confidanté than to confide her own affairs to anyone else.

"Oh, what a comfort it is to me to meet someone that I can trust. I go perfectly mad thinking of how really awful my affair is. I must tell you all about it; he is a clergyman."

Letty was silent — not so the cricket, the tree-toad, the frogs and the cow.

"He is a man of exalted ideals — I love that. But he wants to live in the country, and I do not know whether I could live in the country. That is why I am here; I want to test myself. You see?"

"Y-y-yes," said Letty.

The cuckoo chimed nine.

"I always go to bed at nine," said Letty.

"So early?"

"I get up at five."

"My dear child! I should think that you'd *die!*"

Letty was silent.

"I'll hurry and finish. So I've made up my mind to spend this whole summer in the country and see whether I can breathe its very spirit into me so deep that I shall feel sure of being happy if I marry a man who is settled there."

She paused for an answer, but no answer came.

"We are not engaged," she said; "indeed, I don't mind telling you that he has never asked me anything about it. That's the tragic part of it. But I feel sure that he will some day, and I want

to be prepared to intelligently sacrifice everything for him. I want to know just what I'm doing when I tell him that I'll do it. Besides, the family are all going up in the mountains this summer, and I'm so tired of the mountains."

Letty held her peace.

"But you mustn't think that I'm egotistical," her friend said suddenly; "one of the duties of a clergyman's wife is to interest herself in everybody, and I'm so interested in you, you can't think. I mean to be a real older sister to you and wake your better nature up to the splendid scope of its vast responsibilities."

Lettice rose suddenly.

"I've got to go to bed now," she said, firmly.

"Oh, must you?" There was real regret in the tone.

"Yes."

Miss Holden sighed. She had to let her go, however. Later she sat for a long time looking out upon the peaceful night. The contrast between the peace that the eye saw, and the discordant hum that rasped the ear-drums was most striking. As the night progressed the cow became more inconsolable, the cricket had friends in, and the tree-toad and the frogs joined lots in a political campaign. The cocks began to crow before any of the others let up.

The country visitor had just sunk into a really profound slumber when Letty woke her for her breakfast.

"What time is it?"

"Seven o'clock."

"Why, what ever ——" But then she stopped

short; the ways of the Lord are past all finding out, and perhaps this last straw was necessary to the building of the perfect edifice of a clergyman's wife's spirit.

"Put it on the table," said Miss Holden, meekly.

And then, when Letty had obeyed, she tossed herself in among the pillows again and slept on undisturbed until Letty awoke her again.

"Letters!" the latter announced briefly, advancing to the bed and laying them on its coverlet.

"Thank you so much."

"Can I take the tray?"

"Oh, yes; will you, please? I wasn't hungry; I was very, very tired."

Letty took the tray and carried it down-stairs. But her mother said words when she saw the untouched dishes.

"Humph! What's the good o' me sweatin' fryin' eggs to spoil like that? She'll need be good pay if that's the way she uses good food!"

"She says she's in love," volunteered Letty.

"In love, eh? 'S that why she wants to live in the country an' eat up-stairs?"

"She wants to see whether she'll like livin' in the country. She says *he* lives in the country."

"Well, Heaven help him if he gets her." Mrs. Danbury was sorting the untouched breakfast dishes with a disgusted face. "Here, Emily, you put this ham an' eggs out in the cool room; we can warm it for the boys' lunches maybe. Did I ever!"

"She's awful funny!" said Letty, thoughtfully. Her mother was getting out the ironing-board, and made no answer. Emily returned from disposing of

the ham and eggs according to instructions, and the two sisters were then despatched together to bring the basket of clothes ready for ironing.

While they were all setting to work at Tuesday's regular task the kitchen door opened gently and their boarder, all in white piqué, with a delicate sunshade in one gloved hand, looked in smiling.

"I'm going to walk," she announced; "and will you tell me, please, is the village to the left or the right? I've forgotten which way I came yesterday."

"It's to the left," said Mrs. Danbury, wiping her forehead with her apron. In spite of herself her voice sounded tart, on account of the undercurrent of sentiments which will ever be stirred if you are called upon to contemplate white piqué while you are wiping your forehead with your apron.

"Oh; and what time is luncheon, please?"

"We have dinner at twelve, sharp."

"Oh, thank you. There isn't anything I can do for you in the village, is there?"

"Thanks; no, there ain't."

The door closed gently again, and silence reigned behind.

May Holden never forgot that walk that fresh June morning. Its memories stayed by her for many reasons; she set out so full of crude — pitifully crude — hopes and aims for one thing, and the sun shone so gayly on their shattering for another. The whole country was sweet with clover and there were other fragrances that ministered to the joy with which she started. She was nearly half-way to the village when she met Clifford, and they knew

each other from afar. He quickened his steps when he saw her, and joined her just where the cross-road joined the main.

"This is nice," he said, shaking hands. "I heard of your coming last night — you see it's quite an event in a little place like this." He had loosed her hand at once, and an almost painful flush was on his face.

"I am so glad to be here. It's such a pretty country. And I am really very comfortable." She spoke quickly and constrainedly, and tried to correct the difficulty. "I am so glad I happened to choose this place," she said.

"I am very fond of it," he said; "I have been here nearly a year now." Then he hesitated. "Are you going to the village on an errand," he asked, "or are you just out for a walk?"

"I am just out for a walk."

"Let us go down the cross-road, then; it is so much less dusty."

She turned willingly. Before they had gone many steps he spoke.

"I was just coming to call upon you." With the words his face turned crimson again; he was a singularly clean, innocent, attractive-looking young fellow, and his burning blushes had a charm of their own.

"Oh, were you? How kind of you. I am afraid it's rather a stupid family I live in, but ——"

"Nobody is stupid," he interrupted, gravely; "it is only that we do not understand."

"Yes; I feel that, of course. I realize the tremendous possibilities of them all. I feel as if I had

a mission. I feel as if I were to do them real good."

His clear eyes just drooped sideways upon her face; a little line of pain crept down between his brows. She hurried on.

"I'm to be there three months, you know; that is long enough to accomplish great things. There is a girl of seventeen, and I've already begun to make a friend of her; I shall give her books to read and do just all I can to develop her."

"Why do you want to do that?" His voice was very quiet and low — so quiet and low that she felt surprised herself at a sort of incipient shock which the question, posed so simply, gave her.

But she stumbled on to reply: "Why, because I want to do good; I want to have an influence; I want to help others."

The line of pain deepened.

"It isn't like you," he said. "You've had no experience with those edged tools. You must be very careful or you may do great harm."

"Great harm!" She did not understand.

"Yes; you may make Lettice Danbury discontented and altogether unfit her for the only life for which she is fitted."

She looked at him in astonishment.

"You must forgive me, Miss Holden; but we country clergymen are obliged to look with suspicion upon such eleemosynary assistance as city boarders are apt to bring us. Lettice will make a contented, willing, fairly happy wife and mother if you let her alone. I charge you, therefore, to let her alone."

Miss Holden's cheeks were flushing.

"Pray forgive my bluntness," said the young man; "but you see I am really fighting for my own. Lettice, now and after she marries Reuben next autumn, is and will be one of my parishioners until some accident removes one or the other of us from this township; whereas you are only a friend whom I have known slightly and pleasantly, but with whose life and future I can never expect to have anything whatever to do."

Miss Holden stopped and stooped suddenly. The sensation that his words gave her was absolutely sickening.

"My shoe is untied," she said, thickly.

"May I tie it?" Clifford asked, bending above her.

"No," she said, turning a little from him. "I can manage it myself."

When she straightened up her eyes were full of tears; she was obliged to dry them with a handkerchief.

"It is so dusty," she murmured.

"Yes, indeed," said her companion.

After a little he said: "I hope that I did not put that too harshly about your efforts in behalf of Lettice; I know you mean well."

"Oh, I know that," she said. "I assure you I understand perfectly — and I will be careful."

"A clergyman must fight for his own, you know; and poor little Lettice Danbury, ordinary girl as she is, will have more meaning in my life than any society girl in the city can ever have."

She just nodded.

"Shall you marry a country girl when you do marry?" she asked, after a little.

Clifford removed his hat.

"I have been engaged for two years to the sweetest girl Heaven ever made," he said, reverently. "She has an invalid mother to care for, and I am at present too poor to marry, but we are very happy sharing our waiting."

May Holden turned her head away from him and looked off over the patchwork of the growing crops. The pain within her was the travail that brings forth a soul. All sorts of delusions, illusions, shams and pretenses fell from her as she looked away. She saw much clearly for the first time, and it was her own soul — not poor Lettice's — which she found herself developing.

"How long do you anticipate remaining?" Clifford asked, after the short pause necessary in which to master his surprise at the silence with which she had received his announcement.

"Oh, only a little while." Then she said, gently, "I do hope that you will be very happy, Mr. Clifford."

"Thank you very much," he said, heartily. "I feel pretty positive as to that. She is a dear, affectionate little home-maker, with a real talent for entering into the joys and sorrows of those about her."

Miss Holden was back in good season for dinner, but she had walked too far and looked pale and tired. To Lettice, whom she found dusting her rooms, she expressed a desire for nothing more than a glass of milk.

"I think that I will lie down," she said; "you'll tell your mother not to send me up anything, please."

Lettice told her mother, who was freshly exasperated at the new boarder's lack of consideration.

"An' me killin' chickens on wash-day an' cookin' 'em in the midst o' ironin', an' then she don't want nothin' to eat!"

She continued to scold all through the preparations for dinner and the dinner itself, but when Lettice, going up-stairs in the middle of the afternoon, brought down the glass of milk untouched and the news that the boarder was "crying her eyes out," Mrs. Danbury's mouth closed and her heart opened. She mounted the stairs with a firm step, entered her guest's room, advanced to the bed, and looked down upon the recreant.

"Anybody dead?" she asked, briefly.

"No, not that."

"Anybody hurt, paralyzed, run off with bank money?"

May shook her head, smiling faintly.

"Then what is it?"

"It's something that will make me leave very soon."

"Leave — very — soon!" Mrs. Danbury's tone spoke volumes.

May steadied herself against the pillow.

"I've been thinking about Lettice," she began.

"She can't come to you. She's gone to town with Reuben. It 'most used her up havin' to sit up here last evenin'. Night's their courtin' time." Mrs. Danbury's voice was very high and strained.

"Yes, I know." Miss Holden's voice was very low. "I'm sorry I was so thoughtless last night. I didn't know that she was to be married, then, you

see. And now it's these things, Mrs. Danbury — all these things. I bought them and sent them down here, and I don't want to take them back to town again. I never thought of taking them back when I sent them down. I — I — I thought I might stay l-l-onger, and — I want Lettice to have them. I'm quite able to give them to her. Only the piano I know she cannot use, and that I mean to give to the church for the church parlor."

Mrs. Danbury appeared struck dumb for a minute; then she said, emphatically:

"Well, I must say it's *mighty* kind of you, an' Reuben an' Lettice won't ever know how to thank you enough."

"I'd rather that they didn't try," said May Holden, smiling again, and then she turned on her pillows. "I think I'll try to sleep now," she said.

Later that day, when the evening was again fallen softly over all, she stole to the window and leaned there, looking out upon the same scene with sad, pitifully changed eyes. How puerile and abortive it had all been, her coming, her going, her everything! She felt so ashamed, so pricked with scarlet self-contempt.

And then as the cricket, the tree-toad, the frogs, even the desolate mother-cow, took up their yester-cry, she felt blindly, strangely — a groping towards something strange and sweet and hitherto unknown.

"I was trying for something better," she whispered to herself. "I was trying."

And a wee, naked, shivering, cherubic embodiment of spiritual comfort came and nestled in her heart.

And the next day, when she went home, there went with her the new possibilities of a new soul — a soul born in the country — not to the farmer's daughter — but to the city young lady.

THE WINTER OF THEIR DISCONTENT

WINIFRED'S hair was red and her nose was uplifted. She was an orphan, with a fortune and an independence of disposition. Withal she was charming. What she elected to do she always did and looked forward to always doing. Therefore, when she declared that she would be one of the last party to cross the X Glacier that year she was one of it. An accident happened, and part of the attendant débris carried Winifred with it. Her body was lost, and her mother's second cousins and her father's two aunts were left to contest her property.

It happened, however, that she was not killed. With the daring luck that so frequently attends her shape of nose she was carried on the crest of the snow slide and landed unsmothered in the valley. It was not the valley at the foot of the range, though — it was but an intersecting ravine. In the summer a goatherd's path led through to the slopes beyond, but in the winter it was deserted except for Hetherwaite and his dog.

Hetherwaite was a young man who had elected to live in that lonesome spot for the purpose of studying the action of glacial drift. He was going to be

a college professor, and, because his father had been a vague and delightful dreamer, the son felt a stronger need for glacial investigation than for remedying the Trust evil or simplifying English spelling. Therefore, he had an Alpine hut constructed in the Val d'X, and was settled comfortably there for several months of solitude. He was a good-looking fellow who — unhandicapped by his father's spirit — might have won permanent glory on the football team, but he had never even thought of descending to such folly, being of the cast of mind which, in his present situation, caused him to be more concerned for fear that his ink might freeze than that he might run short of oil — and oil was the operating medium of his one stove.

It was to the door of his hut that Winifred slid, upside down, out of breath, half conscious and totally unexpected.

The dog saw her first, for Hetherwaite was too busy looking afar at the avalanche to perceive a woman almost under his feet.

When he did see her he carried her inside and eyed her with infinite disgust. Before she came to he had figured out that she must have his bunk and either the brush or the comb from then until the following spring.

She opened her eyes shortly after and smiled at the breadth of his shoulders and the excellent manner of his beard and mustache.

"I'm not dead, then?" she asked.

"No," he answered, and it flashed through his mind how simple that solution of her case would have been in such a thawless region.

Later in the day they sat facing each other and discussed the situation. It might have been worse — from Winifred's standpoint, but nothing could have deepened its blackness, according to Hetherwaite's views.

Then the winter set in, for the avalanche had ended the passage of any more parties for that year.

It was an awful winter!

Before the first week of its dreary length had ended all of Winifred's buoyant spirits were gone. She was forced to learn one of life's saddest lessons without the rose-strewn preliminaries which ordinarily soften the first flinty boulders that stand as milestones on that highroad which the majority of men and women prefer to the single path at the side. Hetherwaite — always outdoors — always having his eyes fixed on possible avalanches, never paid any attention to the gift brought him by the first of its kind that year. If his mind had been of the social rather than the glacial order, he might have taken advantage of the rare opportunity Fate had cast his way, and learned definitely whether at least this one woman would make a congenial life companion. A good many of our greatest minds have felt that marriage is at present too often rashly undertaken — that more preliminary acquaintance should be undergone — that a fuller knowledge of each other's characteristics would be a guarantee against the future disenchantment which all too often ensues. But Hetherwaite, deeply annoyed at the unavoidable invasion of his solitude, made no effort to mitigate any of the evils of the situation. On the contrary, he stripped it to its barest and left the bones of the

skeleton for his companion to contemplate from dawn to dark.

The results were sad — a sort of parody on what might have been, but, now never could be. Winifred, forced to feel keenly her unwelcome presence, was further forced — within the passing of one short fortnight — to that full and complete comprehension of all her companion's peculiarities which is the usual lot of a golden-wedded wife. In the same period Hetherwaite arrived at the same understanding of her irremediable deficiencies which generally marks the further boundary of the honeymoon. He took refuge in the friendship of his dog — and just because he found comfort in the dog's society Winifred had no living being to find comfort in.

And the winter swept on — bitterly cold and cheerless.

There were no books in the hut except a few scientific works. There were no implements for any sort of female employment. The question of whether a shirt of outing flannel which her host had given her to replace her fur jacket indoors should be worn hind-side before or as God and the tailor intended, naturally took up only a small share of the earlier portion of each day — and then there were hours, and hours, and yet more hours left to be passed. The poor girl looked out on the blinding glare of ice and often and often wished herself beneath it.

And the winter snowed and blasted itself along.

The night that fell brought Hetherwaite to his silhouette portrait of a home (it may be called a silhouette portrait, since the outline of a house, a fire and a girl waiting were always there), and the con-

versation that followed his entrance partook of a marital tinge — but tinge is too soft a word, their speech was etched with that biting fluid which artists use to eat away the metal.

"Is it cold out?"

"Yes."

"Colder than yesterday?"

"Huh!"

"Colder than yesterday?"

"Yes."

"Oh, dear."

Then silence. He ate moodily, and went to his chart-drawing of altitudes and barometer falls, while she sat there, feeling that the Norwegian hell, with its green transparency and glassy blue ghosts, was yawning about her. Sometimes she thought of falling at his feet and weeping there until some spot within him melted toward her loneliness; but then her pride arose, she recollected what a beggar on his bounty she was, and she folded her hands tightly together and vowed to endure to the end.

And the winter continued to grind and grate along.

When the days began to lengthen a very little a slight incident occurred that was the only event of the whole six eternally long-drawn-out months. Hetherwaite, out staring about in his blue goggles, slipped and sprained his wrist. He tried to bandage it himself, but in the end she had to help him. She did it neatly and quickly, and when the pins were fastened she said, smiling:

"I'm glad I can do something for you."

He did not know what tears quivered behind the

smile and thought she was endeavoring to prove the advantage accruing from her presence there.

"I could have done it myself, after a little," he retorted, at once, and never let her aid him again.

And then the winter hung on dolefully, until the March winds tore it to shreds and flung them out into the April rain to get washed away.

The first expedition over the X Glacier marked the opening of spring, and consequently the unhappy couple noted with joy the beginning of their end. Hetherwaite, looking through his field-glasses, was the first to see a line of little black dots creeping along the heights above, and his exclamation brought Winifred to learn what untold event had called forth such a sound.

He placed the glasses in her hands as quickly as he could adjust them, and then she saw it, too, and cried for the gladness that filled her at the sight. Hetherwaite smiled grimly at her radiance, and the dog wagged his tail. The wag was too much for the girl's full heart at the moment — she fell on her knees at the animal's side, threw her arms about his neck, buried her face in his fur, and burst into tears.

The man who had spent the winter so near and yet so far started as he looked upon her there, and felt suddenly troubled.

"The goatherds will be getting through next week," he said, almost stammering, but with a vague idea of an attempt at comfort; "as soon as they come I can send for some guides to take you back."

She looked up at him and smiled with the bravery that had fought the winter months along.

"It won't seem long now," she said, simply, "and you will have peace soon."

He felt yet more distressed, and, stooping, helped her to rise to her feet.

"I'm afraid I've been a boor to you," he suddenly blurted out. "I never thought of it in that way before."

She dimpled a little, for she was a woman — even after all the Winter just passed through.

"I'd forgive anyone anything to-day," she answered.

And that night they talked together — for the first time since the night after her arrival. And the talk melted some of the glacial débris in Hetherwaite's heart and set the little river that means destruction to every glacier running under the mass of ice above. Perhaps the heart preserved so cool and fresh was all the more susceptible after being thawed out, but Winifred noticed a tremendous epoch of change ensue.

On the fifth day, when the goatherds did really come through, Hetherwaite had begun to doubt whether he could exist at all alone in the Val d'X. He asked seriously whether he would not be a necessary factor in the establishing of the fact that Winifred was not really dead.

"Probably your estate is in probate," he said.

"I can pull it out alone, then," she laughed; "I've learned to be very sufficient unto myself."

He looked hurt — as if she ought not to have said it.

"I don't know that it's safe to send you off like that with five men, anyhow," he objected.

"Perfectly so," she replied.

"It isn't proper, anyhow," he said, firmly.

Then Winifred had to laugh outright.

Hetherwaite stared for a moment, and then he suddenly looked queer.

"I declare," he said; "it seems — honestly, it does seem ——"

Winifred looked at him and waited.

"Anyhow," he said, doggedly and vaguely, "you know the very worst of me now!"

"Yes," she said, amusedly, "and I lived to tell the tale, too."

"I'd never be so beastly again," he said, finally.

"I hope not," she murmured.

"Will you — will you think it over?" he asked, and his eyes were as dumbly appealing as the dog's.

"Perhaps," she told him.

But she smiled into his eyes.

A few mornings later she carefully dressed herself in everything in which she had slid down, and was ready to go.

They walked out together upon the greening slopes to watch for the approach of the party of rescuers. The Val d'X was brilliant in its Alpine livery of spring, and their hearts seemed blossoming with the same gay colors that flecked the landscape of mountainside and valley rivulet.

"I think that we shall be very happy," said Hetherwaite.

"I think so," said Winifred.

Then they saw afar a little cavalcade of advancing jet points.

"You'll soon be gone," he exclaimed, drawing her hand within his own, "but never mind, I'll soon be going myself. And then —— "

They looked at each other and smiled delightfully.

"I'm not complaining," said Winifred, "but —— "

The little points of jet were now as large as chessmen.

"But," said Hetherwaite, "what is it?"

"I should like — " She hesitated again.

"You know you can have what you like, so go on."

"Well, then," she said, suddenly and desperately, "I should like — if you don't mind — to go — afterward, you know — to some flat, warm place."

Hetherwaite burst out laughing.

"Dear Winifred," he exclaimed, "we will go to the Sahara, and I will study sand currents."

And then they saw that the guides were growing in size most rapidly, and went down to meet them.

And the Winter was done.

"FRAU A. D."

THE man stood before his wife; he was absolutely white with raging emotion.

"My dear girl," he said, in a voice that shook, "you may go. You may go where you please. Do you hear?"

His wife looked at him; she was white, too.

"I was going anyway," she said bitterly. "Do you think for a minute that I would stay under your roof another hour after the insults ——"

"Insults!" he cried sharply.

"Insults," she repeated calmly — "after the insults you have heaped on me this night? No, sir; I was going away — I decided to go this afternoon. You are unbearable. I won't live with you a day longer. Thank heaven, I have my own money and am independent. Good-by." She rose and started toward the door.

He looked toward her, and felt a horrible grip at his throat as he did so. But his temper was both flint and steel, and he was silent. But — ah! she was pausing — she was turning — perhaps — God! — perhaps ——

"This ring," she said, coming toward him again, "and this — and this" — she was pulling them from her slender fingers as she spoke — "and this — and

this — you gave them all to me. I don't want them any more."

"Give them to the poor," he said, roughly. "I don't want them, either."

She laid the little sparkling heap upon the table.

"I'm going abroad," she said, without looking at him. "I'm going to live there. I like it better there. Good-by."

She went toward the door again. His heart stood still once when she seemed to falter; but she went on, opened the door, passed through, and it closed behind her.

He found his voice that instant.

"Come back," he cried, in a curious strangled call of unlimited pain.

But she was gone.

And he was alone — alone with the little pile of rings, the wedding ring, the betrothal solitaire, the birthday sapphire, the ——

He went and locked the door quickly. And then he came back and sank down by the table and hid his face in his crossed arms, and his broad shoulders trembled as if — as if ——

A month later, Isabelle had made good her word. She had gone back to Germany, taken an apartment in Hildesheim, secured a lady companion to protect her rather girlish gaze and ways, and settled down for the spring and summer. The change from Harry to Hildesheim was somewhat bewildering and at times almost took her breath away, but on the whole she felt positive that it was a relief, and she loved German people and adored afternoon coffee and evening

bread, so she got on nicely. She had friends in Hildesheim, young married women who had been her schoolmates in Hanover six years before, and they all took time to be nice to her, although their condolences over her situation were so sincere as to be absolutely trying. Isabelle had become a thorough cynic, but her thorough cynicism stopped short of trying to make a German wife and mother understand an American grass-widow. Lini, who had been her dearest friend in the pension days, was the proud possessor of four babies and of a husband whose cards bore the glorious inscription:

"Freiherr Emmo Groning
"Oberstleutnant z. D."

So Lini was a Frau Baronin now.

"But what does 'z. D.' mean?" Isabelle asked, when they sat alone in the glass reception-room that overlooked the Sedanstrasse.

"It means 'zur Disposition,'" said Lini, passing the cakes.

"And what does 'zur Disposition' mean?" Isabelle demanded, taking one of the puff-paste tarts.

"It means that he is in the military service; 'a. D.' means 'ausser Dienst,' and means that an officer has withdrawn from the army for some reason."

Isabelle laughed. "I am a 'Frau a. D.,'" she exclaimed merrily. "What a joke!"

But Lini did not see the joke — her eyes were misty.

"Perhaps it will all come right," she murmured.

"But I don't want it to come right," the caller protested, "you have no idea how horrid he was.

He was so jealous that I couldn't have a peaceful minute, and when men came to call — well, you ought to have heard him swear."

"It is so sad that you have no children," said Lini regretfully. "All would have been well then. Children are the best."

"I'm glad that I have none," said Isabelle decidedly. "What should I have done with children under the circumstances? It's a dispensation of Providence that I have none."

Lini sighed heavily. Isabelle was incomprehensible.

"I'll tell you what I would rather have than any number of children," Isabelle continued, after a minute's silence — "a horse, a good saddle-horse. Do you suppose that I could get one in Hildesheim?"

"I do not know," said Lini. "There are many that ride, but they all ride their own horses. I must ask my husband."

"I should want a very good horse," said Isabelle thoughtfully — "one that can gallop miles. I want to ride every day."

"But whom will you ride with?" Lini asked, pouring out more coffee.

"I'll ride alone."

The young Frau Baronin was quite startled.

"Alone! But you cannot."

"Why not?"

"But no lady does it here. One must ride with one's husband. Ach! but you have no husband!" Then Lini sighed again — sighed heavily and with a deeply sympathetic intonation.

"There is a man on horseback, now," said Isabelle,

allowing the sigh and the sympathy to pass over her insensibilities as lightly as water proverbially affects ducks' backs. Lini turned and looked at the man on horseback.

"So sad," she said. "It is the young Herr Dokter Dorf — such a nice man — and his young wife died, and there are twins and three others, all motherless. Oh, Isabelle, if you had only not married that awful American, you could have perhaps married the Herr Dokter and been a mother to those dear little ones. And you would have had some of your own, too, I hope."

"Do you think he would know where I could get a good horse?" asked Isabelle.

"I do not know," said Lini. "But he is such a nice man. His wife was so happy. It was a great pity that she must die."

"Perhaps I could advertise in the newspaper," the caller suggested.

"Yes, you could do that," said Lini, pouring out more coffee; "but I will always ask my husband. I always ask my husband everything; I cannot see how you live without having your husband by to ask as to everything."

"Perhaps, when I come to-morrow, the Herr Baron will have some information for me," said Isabelle, rising. "I must go now. Don't forget to find out all you can, will you, dear?"

"No," said Lini, embracing her affectionately. "All that one can know my husband will know, and all that he tells me I will tell you."

Then they kissed each other, and Isabelle walked home, her head full of the horse, and her heart full

of an odd and painful void which she choked down whenever she choked up. Lini was so aggravatingly foolish on the husband subject.

Lini spoke to her husband when he came home that late afternoon, and he reflected somewhat and then justified his wife's ardent admiration of his omniscience by knowing exactly where Isabelle could "become a horse," as his countrymen put it.

As a result of some careful arranging, Lini had the Frau Major to meet Isabelle over the coffee-cups the next day, and the Frau Major invited the American to ride with her husband and herself and the Herr Leutnant upon the following afternoon.

"We three ride together every day at four," said the Frau Major, "and it would be a great pleasure to have madame with us. Four is more agreeable than three."

"Ah," thought Isabelle, "I am to take care of the husband for her; and she thinks that I do not see how it is," and she looked at the rosy little woman sitting opposite — and felt a sudden quick beat of self-reproach, for the Frau Major's eyes were as big and blue and true as a baby's. "That will be delightful," she said aloud. "I cannot thank you enough." Then they talked it all over, and talked about some other things, and then Isabelle departed, because she was going to a concert at six o'clock.

"She is very agreeable," said the Frau Major, when she and Lini were alone together. "And what a beautiful figure! Is she a widow?"

"No," said Lini, uneasily; "it is one of those terrible American tales. She has a husband, but they have quarreled and she has left him."

"Frightful!" said the Frau Major, opening her eyes largely. "But why did he allow her to do so? I might be ever so angry, but my husband would never permit me to go to America for that. He will not permit me to go to Berlin until he goes, and that is not until the autumn." Then the Frau Major smiled agreeably over her tale of woe, and took another cake.

"Yes, that is true," said Lini, pouring some more coffee into her friend's cup; "it is very singular — that way they all do across the water. If it was my husband, I might be quite furious and still I could not go." She took another cake. "But then, also — I would not if I could. Am I not his wife?"

The Frau Major drank her final cup of coffee, and signified that she must depart.

Lini kissed her on both cheeks, and, by dint of strong self-control, suffered her to terminate her call.

The next day was the ride. Isabelle took a cab and went to her horse; and there she saw a great row of carriages and automobiles, and quite a royal outfitting of white-lined stalls and liveried stable-men. The cab passed on to a door beyond, and she went upstairs and found the major and the lieutenant and the major's wife having coffee before they started. The major was a stout, handsome, blond man, with a military mustache and splendidly fitting riding-breeches. The lieutenant was thin and dark and wiry. They all went down to the horses together, after the contents of the coffee-pot had been duly absorbed, and Isabelle's heart rose high when she saw their mounts brought out. Then in a second

every bit of sunshine faded, for the lieutenant walked over to his horse, put his hands on the saddle and gave it a quick pull to test its firmness — and the way he did it was exactly the way Harry had done every time that they had ridden together. It was too provoking the way that little incident clouded all the great joy; she felt out of spirits directly — but then the major aided her to mount Lisbeth, and once she was mounted on Lisbeth all domestic problems faded.

They rode out the Garten-strasse and across the Paraden-Platz, and then came the road to Gosler, the wide bridle-path, and the gallop.

It was grand — it was glorious! The pale-blue air, that made a delicate picture of the whole countryside, was as sweet and sharp as hoar-frost crystals to breathe, and it seemed to circle in electrical swirls around the swiftness of Lisbeth and to fill the eyes and ears and spirit of Lisbeth's rider, who, drawing it into her lungs with great joyful gasps, cried to the major, riding there beside her, "I am in heaven — in heaven;" and then she felt suddenly what it would be if Harry were there to hear her words — only, of course, she didn't care. No, no — of course not.

Three miles beyond, they turned into the woods and rode through brush and by-path to the top of the Galgenberg. From the Galgenberg one may see the Brocken — the Brocken of Faust where the witches dance on the night of the first of May. On the Galgenberg was found, some years ago, a wonderful treasure of silver plate which the Romans are supposed to have hidden there in an hour of dan-

ger. But better than Brocken-view or silver-find is that which lies toward the Goslar side of the hill-top — a great level moor where riders may run their horses. When you have your hand on a bridle and your foot in a stirrup, such a moor is a better find and a better view than the gold of Golconda or the Mont Blanc piled up on its sister queens.

They ranged themselves in line at the edge of the field, and then they "let fly." It approached flying in good earnest. The horses seemed to gather rebound out of the soft turf. They broke into a run, and then they lowered their heads and tore madly in great leaps for the opposite side. Isabelle put up her hand and drew her hat well down upon her forehead, as she felt that Lisbeth felt for her — they were one in the wild exhilaration of those moments. It was grand, it was glorious! It was ten times grand — a hundred times glorious.

The Herr Major whistled — the horses quieted as if by magic. They slowed to a trot — slowed yet more to a walk — turned in their tracks, and halted motionless, panting.

"Well, do you like it?" the Herr Major laughed. "Good, is it not? Shall we try it again?"

"A moment first," cried the lieutenant. "I must tighten a girth." He threw himself from the saddle as he spoke, and caught his bridle on his arm. It was another trick of Harry's, and Isabelle gasped.

In one great flood it broke over her how utterly different everything — Lisbeth, moor, and life each day — would be, if — if — if ——

"Los!" cried the poor imitation of that very large and dark man whom she had deserted some

weeks before, and free they flew over the gray moor — through the pale-blue air.

The farther line of forest-trees was bounding nearer with every spring of Lisbeth's lithe muscles, and her rider's teeth were clinched with the nervous excitement of the minute, when suddenly — oh, the horror of it — the left fore-foot of the great brown mare went down into the treacherous hole of some burrowing creature, and Lisbeth, giving that ghastly shriek of a horse in agony, went forward on her shoulders with a sickening lunge.

Who that rides much has ever been lucky enough never to have measured the possible terror of that second?

Isabelle knew what had befallen — she knew she was loosed from the saddle — she felt herself in the air — before her vision rose death, and her husband's face — it was all over, life and love — she cried his name with all her strength — and she felt herself being hurled into eternity.

One day in midsummer she opened her eyes again. It was her own room, her own bed, only the trees were green and she had last seen them brown and bare.

There was a pressure about her temples, and she put up her hand and found it was a bandage. Then it all came back to her, and with it the hungry heart-cry of that awful last instant of living memory. Hardly knowing that her thought was on her lips, she voiced it aloud.

"Harry!" she cried again, and though the sound was so feeble that she herself was surprised, still it was loud enough to be answered — and it was her

very own husband who appeared instantly in the doorway.

They looked into each other's eyes.

"Well, girlie," he said, biting his lip. His voice shook even more than it had shaken on the night of their parting, and the brown of his eyes was shining wet.

"Come to me," she said, catching a little quick breath, and tried to hold out her hands, but found that one was bound down helpless. He caught the other in his own and fell on his knees beside the bed. "Darling — mine — my wife," he stammered, and kissed her lips and her hand, and looked hungrily into her gaze.

"When did you come?" she said faintly.

"The day you were hurt."

"The day I was hurt!" she repeated in astonishment.

"Yes, I — I left the second week after you did. I — I ——" He halted. "It was so infernally lonely," he exclaimed, suddenly and fiercely.

She smiled. That was such good news.

"I'm glad you came," she said. "Do you know, I'm ashamed to be here without a husband — it's so un-German." She laughed a tiny but very happy laugh as she spoke.

"It was all a hideous mistake," he said. "I know better now. I won't be such a fool again."

"It was partly my fault," she protested generously. "But then, I don't know, either. You mustn't blame me for being pretty and attractive."

"I don't blame you at all," said the man. "I blame myself and myself alone."

"That's so dear of you," she said, with a smile, and then she closed her eyes and lay still for a few minutes. Then —

"Did you bring my rings or did you give them to the poor?" she asked.

"I brought them," he said. "I have them in my pocket. May I put them on?"

She smiled, and spread her fingers out upon his palm. He took the rings from his vest-pocket and put them on with kisses.

"You shall have a new one to celebrate to-day," he said. "A ruby and a topaz — Hildesheim's colors."

She smiled — her eyes closed as her lips parted. "I'm so sleepy," she murmured. "But don't leave me."

He bent his head near.

"I won't," he declared. "Never again," he added. She smiled a little, and turned her face to rest upon the pillow; he rested there beside her with her hand in his. He thought that she was asleep, when suddenly he felt her turn quickly.

"Oh, Harry," she exclaimed, "in my desk is my card-case — get me a card. I want to write a message to Lini, at once, without delay."

He went and brought the card.

"Can I write it for you?" he asked.

"Yes, you must — I have only my left hand. It's very short. Just put a small 'z' and a large 'D' after the name, that's all."

"A small 'z' and a large 'D.'" He spoke as if he did not understand.

"It means something in German, dear," said his wife, a little smile quivering about her lips. "Lini

will understand even if you don't. Please put it in an envelope and have them send it to her at once."

Lini, pouring coffee for her husband that afternoon, laughed with joy over the card.

"How delightful!" she said. "Isn't that quite like Isabelle? She is always thinking something different from any one else. And her husband, he is quite delightful, too. Really, I think he loves her as well as you do me."

"Possibly," said the Herr Baron. "And now, my dear child, bring me my afternoon paper."

Lini's face flushed with pleasure; she sprang from her seat and flew to obey.

Being married! — what is there like it?

"EE," SAID 'LIZABET — "EE," SAID HANS

THE wagon was long and low and narrow. It had very high sides — so high that the calf could see nothing at all. It had a hard wooden seat — so hard that when a wheel struck a stone and 'Lizabet, seated on the right, bounced vigorously to the left, the casual observer would have taken a painful result for granted. But the casual observer would have been wrong (unless while observing 'Lizabet he had been considering the calf), for nothing so slight as a stone that sent her six inches into the air and slammed her down a foot to the left or right, as the case might be, ever caused 'Lizabet to rein in. If the calf had been driving it might have been different, for the calf was certainly far from happy. But then the calf had been a calf for a comparatively short period, and probably worldly experience, as personified by the day's ride, was an absolute necessity in his character's development.

'Lizabet had been 'Lizabet for thirty-two years. Given 'Lizabet's life for these thirty-two years, plus her parents' individual peculiarities of face and race, and minus everything that has made the reader of these lines able and willing to read them, and you have the peasant-woman's whole being distinctly before you. From earliest childhood she had done with

commendable vigor whatever task lay before her; for nearly the whole period of her thirty-two years' span she had milked and churned, and plowed and seeded, and reaped and harvested, and spun and washed, with just the same energy that was now bouncing the calf to market; it was beautiful to see in this age of "storm and stress," and striving and problems, a soul so free from all four forms of mental woe; 'Lizabet had never even had a love affair, having inherited her father's nose — a nose which would not prevent a man from marrying, but which would surely prevent nine hundred and ninety-nine women out of a thousand from ever getting their feet set in the path that leads toward hopes of such a future.

Bounce, they went over another stone!

"Ee!" said 'Lizabet, not because she minded, but simply because "Ee" was her favorite remark alone and in company. The calf, who had been trying to adjust one of his eyes to a knot-hole to the end that he might form some slight conception of what life in town meant, suddenly found his nose sadly bumped, and cried "E-e-e" on his own hook.

Just then they came on to the cobblestones, and all that had gone before was as nothing compared to the shaking up that took place until they stopped at the "Golden Angel" to leave the horse.

The "Golden Angel" had been an inn since long before Frederick the Great had slept there one night when he couldn't manage to get anywhere else. The landlord shows his room yet, and during the two hundred years since the event quite a few toilet articles used by the great king have accumulated in the room; two match-boxes, and a shaving-cup bearing Queen

Victoria's portrait, are among these touching souvenirs. (All this *en passant.*)

The landlord's wife was in the courtyard whipping her youngest son. When she saw 'Lizabet drive in she let the boy go unfinished, and went herself to welcome her guest. Between them they lifted the calf out, and the landlord's wife asked if it was for the butcher.

"Nein," said 'Lizabet, and she stood off and gazed on the calf as affectionately as if she had not been half-banging his breath out for an hour.

"And how well you are looking!" said the wife, mindful of what it behooves a landlord's wife to say, without reference to whether a guest has inherited her father's nose or not.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet indifferently, and she took the calf in hand and started off without paying any attention to the fact that the calf had just been facing in the opposite direction.

It was market-day, and the market was out in great force in the angle between the *Rathaus* and the *Andreaskirche*. The market was very lively, much more lively than usual, and 'Lizabet, leading her calf, joined the hubbub with sensations as blithesome as her Slavic ancestry would permit her to feel.

Frau Gruber saw the newcomer first. Frau Gruber was the oldest and fattest of all the market-women, the dean of the community, so to speak.

"Ee, 'Lizabet," she cried, nodding freely.

'Lizabet halted. The calf, too. (Although the calf had meant to go on until he felt his restrictions.)

"Hast heard, 'Lizabet?" Frau Gruber was big-eyed.

"Nein," said 'Lizabet.

"Wait thou, then," said the Frau, and then she raised her gray dress skirt and revealed a blue petticoat, raised her blue petticoat and revealed a red one, raised her red petticoat and revealed a black one, investigated the black one somewhat and found her pocket. When her hand sank into the pocket a beatific expression overspread Frau Gruber's countenance — no one had ever robbed her, and yet she always underwent a certain anxious strain when she sought her pocket. Life is notably a deception, and who can be sure of anything? But now her hand was in the pocket, and the next second her pocketbook was in her hand.

'Lizabet stood waiting. She waited, as she did all else, with great vigor. The only way one can betray vigor in waiting is by breathing hard, and 'Lizabet puffed like a motor while Frau Gruber opened her pocketbook and showed — a lottery ticket!

"To-day?" said 'Lizabet, opening her own eyes.

"To-day," said Frau Gruber.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet.

Just then a lady stopped to buy two cents' worth of onions, a cent's worth of parsley, and a quarter of a cent's worth of mustard-seed. Frau Gruber begged 'Lizabet to guard her purse while she attended to the lady, for she was one of her best customers. Then after the purchase was made and the change settled, and Frau Gruber had asked after the lady's husband, and the lady had asked after Frau Gruber's foot, she went away and 'Lizabet gave back the purse.

"Thou shouldst also a ticket become," said Frau Gruber, in as friendly a tone as if it were possible for them each to draw the one grand prize.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet musingly. She was thinking the same thing.

"A great chance," said Frau Gruber.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet.

Just then Hans Muller, the butcher, came up.

"Ee, 'Lizabet," he said, "a beautiful calf!"

"For thee, perhaps," suggested Frau Gruber.

"Nein," said 'Lizabet.

Hans paused. I wish I could describe him, but he was *too* homely. Literature should elevate, and a good description of Hans Muller would depress any one.

"What for not?" said Hans, eying the calf longingly.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet. She rarely committed herself hastily.

"I advise her a ticket to become," said Frau Gruber, beginning to replace her own ticket in her own safety deposit.

"Yes, that she must do," said Hans.

'Lizabet looked at him. No man had ever said "must" to her before, and it sounded subtly sweet through such feminine fibers of feeling as the cobblestones had not completely deadened. Frau Gruber saw 'Lizabet's look. She was a born matchmaker.

"Thou, Hans, get her one," she said.

Hans hesitated. Strikingly ugly men are rarely ever rushingly gallant.

"I will show her where she can buy it herself," he said.

"Miser," said Frau Gruber — "thou who art alone in the world with a good trade! Wherefore shouldst thou not buy one who is poor a ticket? Ever is it thy cousin's brother-in-law who is the agent."

Right here was the turning-point in our dear 'Lizabet's career.

'Lizabet started. Not violently, but solidly. When one's heart has just been stirred for the first time one does not relish being belittled in the eyes of what may be going to be the beloved object. 'Lizabet was a woman, after all.

"Ee," she cried hotly, "I am no poor one; I have brought three thousand marks to the bank!"

There was a deep and thrilling hush at this, for no one in the whole countryside had ever had the remotest suspicion that 'Lizabet had so thriven.

Frau Gruber gasped. Hans stared. Even the calf felt the electrical shock of surprise, and gave a wild skip.

Hans spoke first.

"I will buy the ticket," he said; "come."

But Frau Gruber interposed; she had just remembered a widowed brother in Dettingen.

"Needs not," she said, catching 'Lizabet by the hand, "I will give her mine. She is also dear to me."

"Come," said Hans. He seized the other hand as he spoke. 'Lizabet stood extended between them like the old woodcuts of "A Soul in Doubt."

"Ee," said 'Lizabet.

"Thou, 'Lizabet," said Frau Gruber, "bethink thee ——"

But Hans interrupted.

"Come, my 'Lizabetchen," he said.

My gracious goodness, the effect of that "my" and that "chen"! 'Lizabet would have followed him — anywhere. She jerked away from Frau Gruber, and she and the calf and Hans went off together. Frau Gruber looked after them and shook her head. Hans and 'Lizabet, hand in hand, and chaperoned by nothing more wily than a calf (also in hand) was indeed a sad sight for the sister-in-law of a widower in Dettingen.

"Willst thou have some *sirop?*" asked Hans.

'Lizabet could hardly realize that she was herself. She had always provided her own *sirop* heretofore, and it must be stated that she had provided so little that unbought *sirop* had helped materially in the swelling of her bank account.

"Ee," she said affirmatively.

Hans led her through the narrow *Judenstrasse* into the *Johannesplatz*. There was there a small and quiet restaurant fenced in behind two ivy screens, and two soldiers were drinking peacefully at a small table within the enclosure.

"I will tie the calf," said Hans. "Sit, thou."

'Lizabet sat forthwith. It was so novel to be ordered about — so womanly and delightful, too. Life was changing its meaning completely. She reflected on Hans' likeness to King Otto over the *Stadhaus* door, and did not know that it was the rains of three centuries and the missile of one ardent reformer which had produced the striking resemblance.

When Hans came back he pounded on the match-safe and called, "Ho, two *sirop!*" 'Lizabet could but admire the way he pounded and the way he called.

"In what bank is thy gold?" he said then.

"In the Dettingen Bank," said 'Lizabet.

"A good bank," said Hans.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet, and felt a warm current of joy at his approval.

Then the *sirop* came, and they drank it.

"Seest thou," said Hans, "I have a lottery ticket; I give it to thee." He pushed it across the table as he spoke. 'Lizabet took the ticket. The *sirop* was pleasant to her taste. She had a vision of Hans smoking his pipe while she chopped wood and her eyes filled with tears, — sweet, mystic tears.

"Ee, Hans," she said, looking at him.

He put out his hand and shook hers.

"I shall become the calf — shall I not?" he asked.

She looked at him with swimming eyes. Anything that was hers was his. Oh, how like King Otto he looked! And he had ears, too, which King Otto had not — not for a century and a half, anyhow.

Oh, yes, he could have the calf.

"Ee," she told him, nodding.

Hans pounded for more *sirop*, and they drank two more glasses. The soldiers were gone now.

"Dost love me?" asked Hans.

"Ee," confessed 'Lizabet, and they shook hands again across the table.

Then they sat quiet for some time. Hans was thinking agreeable thoughts concerning the Dettingen Bank, and 'Lizabet was thinking agreeable thoughts concerning things of which she had heretofore never thought at all.

The first thing they knew both were asleep. It

was the landlord picking up the glasses that woke them.

"Ee," said Hans, yawning vastly.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet, looking tenderly down his throat.

"We are betrothed," stated Hans emphatically.

'Lizabet felt numbly ecstatic.

"Come," said Hans; "we must back with the calf."

"Ee," said 'Lizabet. She was anxious to tell Frau Gruber.

"I will leave thee here," said Hans, at the first corner; "I want to put the calf in surety."

'Lizabet went on alone. The whole market was a-hum with the news of her wealth when she arrived there. It was the pleasantest experience of her life. All had something agreeable to say, and Freda, the butter-woman's daughter, asked if she needed help in her house, and courtesied when she said it.

"Nein," said 'Lizabet, but the sight of a courtesy directed at herself filled her with more new emotions.

"I hope that dumbhead Hans bought you a ticket," said Frau Gruber in a rather acid tone.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet. She did not resent Hans being designated as a "dumbhead." Her repose of spirit was quite above such trivial matters.

"My brother-in-law from Dettingen is coming Sunday," went on Fräu Gruber. "You must certainly come and walk with us in the fields."

"Ee," said 'Lizabet. She saw no reason why she should not walk in the fields. There was a pause.

"There comes that fellow," said Frau Gruber.

'Lizabet looked around and saw Hans.

"We are betrothed," she told her friend.

Frau Gruber threw up both hands.

"Ach Gott — ach Gott — ach Gott!" she cried.

The women came running from all around.

"We are betrothed," said 'Lizabet to all. Hans stood behind her and said nothing. His face was inflexible. He was not even Slavic — he was pure Stone Age, through and through. Every one was crowding about them. 'Lizabet's hands were shaken from all directions.

Then of a sudden a man came hastening out of the *Gewerbehaus;* in his hand was a paper. He waved it. It was the lottery returns.

"Ach Gott — ach Gott — ach Gott!" said Frau Gruber. She pressed her ticket to her heart. It was beating violently. Her other hand sought 'Lizabet's. The man began to take a paper out of an envelope. 'Lizabet herself was conscious of a swimmingness in some not very distinctly outlined quarter of her being. Frau Gruber sat down. "Hold thou my ticket," she told 'Lizabet. 'Lizabet took her ticket.

'Lizabet felt Frau Gruber leaning heavily against her. Hans took the ticket from her; he was holding hers in his other hand.

The man read the number — "89204!"

Frau Gruber gave a shriek. Hans held 'Lizabet's ticket high in the air.

"89204!" he called loudly.

"But that —" began 'Lizabet.

But she never said more. Hans gave her a look that reduced her to "Ee" again.

And poor Frau Gruber was gone. Dead of the

shock of the disappointment. You can imagine the confusion in the market.

Along toward dusk 'Lizabet drove home with Hans and the calf. They did not talk much, for their natures were not of that species which demand much conversational outlet.

"We shall be married now," said Hans.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet.

"I shall send Frau Gruber a wreath," said Hans.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet.

"We owe her much," said Hans.

"Ee," said 'Lizabet.

"Ee," said Hans himself. And spoke no more.

ALPINE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

"WHAT will it be — will it be goats like those of yesterday?"

Little Marie's sweet face was upturned to Jean's, even though Jean was too engaged with his work to glance into the earnest question of his companion's eyes.

"They were so pretty yesterday — those goats. They ran along together just as the real goats run. Will it be more goats — that?"

She laid her tiny forefinger upon the long rough piece of wood that the boy held in his hand, and he had to stay his knife-blade for fear of cutting her.

"No," he said, a little smiling and a little impatient, "not goats, Mariechen. Guess again; and take thy hand away."

Marie took her hand away and folded it into the keeping of her other hand. She always obeyed Jean instantly because her five years revered his twelve years in a way that never permitted any delay in such matters. But her great blue eyes continued riveted on his work.

"Will it be hens?" she asked presently. "Last week it was hens. All crowding about the big open pan to eat; dost remember? Will it be hens, Jean?"

"No, not hens," said the boy, turning the wood deftly this way and that and laying many notches in its roughness, each notch with its own especial foresight of meaning, "not hens, Mariechen; patience."

The little child clasped her hands yet tighter and strove to keep silence. She was a very wee thing, small and delicate and fragile as a flower, clothed in the plain, stout garments of the country mode, her pretty face instinct with shadow and sunbeam.

Jean was of another blood and quality, darker and with something hot pulsing nervously behind his dogged patience. There was a strong contrast between the compression of his full lips and the parted lines of those of his companion.

"Will it be rabbits?" she said now, leaning close again; "it was rabbits once, and they were so pretty."

He shook his head shortly and made no answer.

"Do I trouble?" the little thing asked then anxiously.

He did not reply.

She looked steadily into his face for a minute or two, and then she said almost in a whisper:

"Will it be sheep, perhaps?"

He laid down his knife at that and put his arm around her and hugged her up close to him. She sighed a long, happy, baby sigh, and they sat still thus for a few minutes.

The small cemetery was behind them with its humble array of poor crosses of wood standing none too straightly among lichen-covered stones. Behind the cemetery was a slope of barrenness, behind that a

band of pine forest, behind that the towering mountain side. To their left was the village, a straggling village, a village of little Swiss mountain huts gathered around three or four slightly pretentious buildings. Below them was a long sinuous valley with a silver river threading its middle. Beyond — across the valley — rose a line of Alpine giants.

The boy, hugging the child within the protection of his strong left arm, looked, with an appreciation and understanding beyond his years, over the scene before him. As he did so he slowly opened and closed the fingers that had been handling the knife, as if to ease their cramped fatigue.

"Mariechen," he said presently, "I will tell you all about it."

"Yes." Her face turned up toward his at once. "Will it be rabbits, then?"

"No," he said, looking away toward the mountains, "it will be cows; many cows, all following toward the pasturing on the slope. I saw such yesterday, and I meant then to do them to-day. Let me tell you why. You know old Wilhelm at the store close by where the trains stop down in the valley?"

"Yes," said the child.

"He has promised me a whole franc for every such that I bring him. Fancy, Mariechen, a whole franc!"

His eyes deepened and brightened; the child stared wonderingly.

"What canst thou do with a whole franc, Jean?"

"What can I do with it? I can save it, and add another to it and another to that, and after a while — after a long, long while — I can take them all, and cross the mountains, and go into Italy, there on

the other side, and study and learn to carve in marble instead of wood."

The child turned her eyes downward and big tears gathered thick in them. Her head slipped from its place beneath his arm and rested on his knee. For some little while he continued to gaze on the mountain peaks, and then of a sudden he reached again for his carving and said:

"Lift thy head, Mariechen. I must go on working, and I might cut thee."

Possibly Mariechen, in spite of her extreme youth, was feminine enough to have preferred risking injury to removing her head just then; but Jean was masculine enough to back up his command with a certain impatient gesture, and so she sat up, looked the other way, and absorbed some tears by winking fast — a trick we nearly all learn young.

While she was still seeing the universe as a lurid and watery kaleidoscope of blue and green, a sudden patch of black broke in among the colors, and the child, who had been born by the edge of the cemetery, knew what it was. They came so often across her field of vision — those patches of black — and the kind old priest, who had taught her her prayers, had also taught her just what they meant. She forgot her tears and looked with wide-eyed reverence upon the cortège approaching, for she knew that that day a new angel had entered God's heaven and that all sorrow was over and only joy was left for some one who had once been as others of the earth.

"It is the English lady," said Jean quickly under his breath.

Marie knew just whom he meant. The English

lady had come up there to live many months since and had had all the best rooms across the front of the Gasthof. The English gentleman had come with her, and walked by her wheeled chair as long as she was wheeled out daily, and had sat by her on the balcony after she had ceased to be wheeled out any more. They saw him now walking there beside the priest, looking just as he always had looked. In his hand he had some white flowers such as he had been in the habit of buying each morning in the market. He looked at Marie and smiled on her just as he had always smiled. She returned the smile. Jean had put his wood-carving aside until the little procession should be gone by. The sun was shining and the birds were calling among themselves. It seemed as if the world was just trying to go on as usual and yet was really a little different because of the English lady's passing.

Presently the children were alone again.

"They will return the other way; they always do," said Jean, and resumed his work.

Marie sat by him in silence for a long hour and watched the cows grow one by one into being. Like magic their horns sprouted upward, their ears came out underneath, their noses took on shape, out of the solid mass a quartet of legs divided themselves off for each one; it was all but a miracle to observe what Jean could do.

A shadow fell forward from behind them. Both looked up quickly and saw the English gentleman. He had his hat drawn down over his eyes, and had left the flowers in the cemetery, but he smiled as usual into their faces.

"Well, how goes it?" he said cheerfully in good French, and then he came around beside them and sat down on the ground.

"It goes very well, sir," said Jean.

He stopped his work as he spoke and looked from it to the English gentleman, being somewhat uncertain as to just what the latter had meant by his question. But the gentleman, whatever he had meant, had certainly not meant any reference to the carving, for he looked far away across the mountains, dragged at his heavy yellow mustache, and said nothing more for a long time. Jean, after two or three furtive glances, went on with his work, and Marie sat still between the two, looking first at one and then at the other.

After a while the English gentleman, with a long, deep breath, ceased to gaze across the valley, and turned toward the children.

"Listen," he said, "I want something done; will you do it?"

"What is it?" said Jean.

"Not you," said the gentleman. "It is the little girl that I am asking." He took Marie's hand as he spoke, and drew her close to him.

"What is it?" she asked.

"You know the white flowers that I buy each day in the market," said the gentleman, his brows contracting strangely.

"Yes," said Marie; "it is Bettina who sells them to you."

"Yes," said the gentleman, "I fancy so." He stopped and bit his lip, then, "I am going away," he said. "I am going now — to-night — God

knows where — or if I shall ever return." He drew Marie closer as he spoke. "Little child," he said, "I have left money, plenty of money, with the good Père Lorenz at the church, and he will give it to you when you ask it. I want you to go to the market each day and buy all the white flowers that Bettina has — all, you hear — and bring them up here to the cemetery, and cover the new grave with them. Cover it just as they fall from your little fingers — what any one else wishes or advises does not matter — some one will clear yesterday's away each morning before you come — only never fail to come. And when thou art come to womanhood there will be a reward for thy pains awaiting thee."

He put his face down close to hers as he spoke the last words and she felt a curious throbbing where her little form touched his bosom — then he put her gently from him and rose.

"Do not remind her," he said, speaking to Jean now. "She is of those who do not forget." Then he covered his eyes with his hand, turned from them, and walked away.

Marie looked after him until he was out of sight and then she turned and saw that Jean was motionless and staring also.

"And I am to go each day and bring the flowers for the English lady's grave!" the little girl said slowly and wonderingly; "what will the mother say to that!"

"She will say nothing," said Jean. "If the Père Lorenz has the money, it means that it is right for you to do it."

"And when I am a woman he will return to

thank me," said the child, still slowly, still wonderingly.

"He said so," said the boy.

Then he took up his work again, and the child sat still at his side and thought.

II

IT was ten years after that, one autumn afternoon, the Père Lorenz, pacing the narrow path between the double row of mounds in the little graveyard, saw Marie approaching with her armful of white blossoms.

Ten years is a long time. It bows the head and stoops the shoulders and whitens the hair of the elderly, be he priest or layman; it carries a child of five straight forward into womanhood, and deepens the blue of her eyes, and their trust and their shadows; it carries boys of artistic bent out into the world afar and away.

Marie approached the grave which had never been marked other than by that daily coverlet of pure white flowers, and, smiling as she noted the kind face of the old priest turned her way, proceeded to her task. As the flowers fell from her fingers the Père Lorenz approached and stood by her side.

"Child," he said gently, "it is now ten years since the English seigneur set thee this work. Hast never wearied?"

"Oh, no, father," said the young girl, "rather have I come to love it more and more as I came to understand." Her lip quivered somewhat as she spoke the last words.

"Dost think to understand?"

"I have dared to think so."

"How so, my child?"

"He loved her ——"

"Yes," said the priest as she hesitated.

"As I also love," she added, almost sadly.

"Yes," said the priest again.

"Father" — the last of the flowers had fallen to the ground now; she turned toward him empty-handed — "I had a letter from Jean yesterday. He is in Florence. He is very poor; he hardly has bread."

"So!" said the old priest.

"I have sent him all I can spare, but it is so little — so very little. And now he is working on a great piece — and if he might only finish it —" She faltered and stopped.

"Go on," said the priest.

"Father, you told me once that when I came to marry, you had my *dot* — that the English gentleman left it in your hands years ago — when he went away ——"

"Go on," said the priest again.

"Father, I shall never marry — never. Give Jean the money."

The priest looked at her young, passionate face, and a faint, sad smile swept over his own.

"Very well," he said, "I will send him the money; since you are so sure that you will never marry."

She turned a little pale, but, "I am very sure," she said simply.

The next day the money was sent.

When the snow came that winter the stranger, the

English gentleman, returned. He wore a long heavy coat, and with him were two other gentlemen and three servants. In the Gasthof the waiter who served the party told that when the seigneur took off his coat he showed that one arm had been shot away. Also he had a bit of color in his buttonhole that meant much. Evidently the ten years had counted in his life.

The Père Lorenz came to the Gasthof, and the English gentleman put on his heavy coat and walked with him to the cemetery.

"There will be a stone now," he said, pulling his mustache quite as he used to do as they drew near. "You have heard, perhaps?"

"No," said the good priest, "I have heard nothing. Pray tell me."

"I had it put in competition in Florence," said the English gentleman; "the prize went to a young sculptor of this region. He must have a wondrous talent. It is the child, the little girl, done to the life, scattering flowers at the foot of the cross. You, perhaps, know the young man."

"I can guess who it is," said the good priest. "God be praised for his success."

"There is to be no name upon the cross," said the English gentleman. "In her death as in her life I shall ever respect her slightest wishes." A dull red flushed his face as he said the words.

The priest said nothing.

"There was one thing that made me very happy there in Florence," the English gentleman continued presently; "it was that the winning in the competition permitted the young sculptor to marry."

Père Lorenz turned suddenly.

"To marry!" he repeated, as if perhaps he had not heard quite correctly.

"Yes, to marry," said the English gentleman. "He married almost directly — the next day, I think."

"Yes," said the priest, a little numbly — "yes."

They turned into the cemetery. The autumnal sun was very bright. The stranger walked directly toward the mound that was, as ever, white with mountain flowers.

"I was almost young when I came here last," he said. "O God! how well I recall that day!"

The priest was silent; his thoughts were far away.

"And the child?" asked the stranger, "the little one with the wonderful eyes? What has become of her?"

"She lives with her parents, as ever."

"She has never married?"

"Monsieur, she is as yet barely sixteen."

"Ah, so," said the stranger, "and yet I thought that sixteen was womanhood here. Well, her day is yet to come."

The priest bowed his head. In his ears sounded the passionate appeal of the young girl's voice, "Father, I shall never marry. Give Jean the money."

"Monsieur," he said suddenly, "I must tell you the truth. Her day has come and gone."

The English gentleman stopped short.

"You mean she is dead?"

"No, monsieur; she loved the young artist, and sent him her *dot* that he might remain in Florence for the competition."

The English gentleman looked straight down at the ground for a little. His face was dark, and he bit his lip hard.

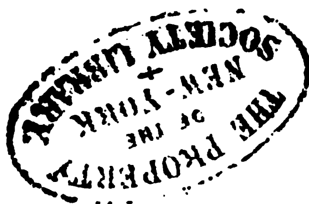
"Father," he said at last, "when I came here twelve years ago, what was thought?"

"Much was thought," said the priest.

The stranger turned sharply from him.

"Oh, Alpine lights and shadows," he murmured, and covered his eyes with his hand.

THE END.



A Masterpiece of Native Humor

SUSAN CLEGG AND HER FRIEND MRS. LATHROP

By ANNE WARNER
Author of "A Woman's Will," etc.

With Frontispiece. 227 pages. 12mo. $1.00.

IT is seldom a book so full of delightful humor comes before the reader. Anne Warner takes her place in the circle of American woman humorists, who have achieved distinction so rapidly within recent years.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

Nothing better in the new homely philosophy style of fiction has been written.—*San Francisco Bulletin.*

Anne Warner has given us the rare delight of a book that is extremely funny. Hearty laughter is in store for every reader.—*Philadelphia Public Ledger.*

Susan is a positive contribution to the American characters in fiction.—*Brooklyn Times.*

Susan Clegg is a living creature, quite as amusing and even more plausible than Mrs. Wiggs. Susan's human weaknesses are endearing, and we find ourselves in sympathy with her.—*New York Evening Post.*

No more original or quaint person than she has ever lived in fiction.—*Newark Advertiser.*

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., Publishers, BOSTON

At all Booksellers'

Another Popular "Susan Clegg" Book

SUSAN CLEGG AND HER NEIGHBORS' AFFAIRS

By ANNE WARNER

With frontispiece. 12mo. Cloth, $1.00

All the stories brim over with quaint humor, caustic sarcasm, and concealed contempt for male folk and matrimonial chains. — *Philadelphia Ledger.*

Anything more humorous than the "Susan Clegg" stories would be hard to find. — Jeannette L. Gilder, Editor of *Putnam's Magazine.*

The best work that Anne Warner has published. Miss Clegg has become an institution in the humor of America. — *Baltimore Sun.*

Her "Susan Clegg" stories, rich in pungent humor and extremely clever in their portrayal of quaint and amusing character, deserve a place among the choice specimens of American humorous literature — which means the best humorous literature in the world. — *New York Times.*

Sure to be welcomed by that large class of readers who found in "Susan Clegg and Her Friend Mrs. Lathrop" one of the most genuinely humorous books ever written by a woman on this side of the Atlantic. — *St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., PUBLISHERS

254 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON

The Third Susan Clegg Book

SUSAN CLEGG AND A MAN IN THE HOUSE

By ANNE WARNER

Finely Illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens
12mo. Cloth, $1.50

Without the slightest doubt the best of all the Susan Clegg books. — ***Cleveland Leader.***

A smile on every page and many hearty laughs to each chapter. — ***Philadelphia Telegraph.***

Her "Susan Clegg" books rank with the best in American humorous literature. — ***Nashville American.***

Susan's homely humor is of as excellent a quality as when she first came to public ken. — ***Brooklyn Times.***

Miss Clegg's experiences with a male boarder, as here recorded, are to be recommended heartily to people who may have found refreshment in "Three Men in a Boat" or the sea worthies of W. W. Jacobs. — ***Nation,*** **New York.**

It is a rare pleasure to find a book so wholesome, so amusingly philosophical, and so full of the real quality of things that last. Susan is a positive joy, and the reading world owes Anne Warner a vote of thanks for her contribution to the best of American humor. — ***New York Times.***

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., PUBLISHERS
254 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON

New Edition with Pictures from the Play

THE REJUVENATION OF AUNT MARY

By ANNE WARNER

Author of "Susan Clegg and Her Friend Mrs. Lathrop," "A Woman's Will," etc.

Illustrated. 12mo. Cloth. $1.50

Always amusing and ends in a burst of sunshine.—*Philadelphia Ledger.*

Impossible to read without laughing. A sparkling, hilarious tale.—*Chicago Record-Herald.*

The love story is as wholesome and satisfactory as the fun. In its class this book must be accorded the first place.—*Baltimore Sun.*

The humor is simply delicious.—*Albany Times-Union.*

Every one that remembers Susan Clegg will wish also to make the acquaintance of Aunt Mary. Her "imperious will and impervious eardrums" furnish matter for uproarious merriment. . . . A book to drive away the blues and make one well content with the worst weather.—*Pittsburg Gazette.*

Cheerful, crisp, and bright. The comedy is sweetened by a satisfying love tale.—*Boston Herald.*

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., PUBLISHERS
254 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON

An International Love Comedy

A WOMAN'S WILL

By ANNE WARNER

Author of "Susan Clegg and Her Friend Mrs. Lathrop."

IT is a relief to take up a volume so absolutely free from stressfulness. The love-making is passionate, the humor of much of the conversation is thoroughly delightful. The book is as refreshing a bit of fiction as one often finds; there is not a dull page in it.—*Providence Journal.*

It is bright, charming, and intense as it describes the wooing of a young American widow on the European Continent by a German musical genius.—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

A deliciously funny book.—*Chicago Tribune.*

There is a laugh on nearly every page.—*New York Times.*

Most decidedly an unusual story. The dialogue is nothing if not original, and the characters are very unique. There is something striking on every page of the book.—*Newark Advertiser.*

A more vivacious light novel could not be found.—*Chicago Record-Herald.*

Illustrated by I. H. Caliga. 360 pages. 12mo.
Decorated cloth, $1.50.

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., PUBLISHERS, BOSTON
At all Booksellers'